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THE
HISTORY OF JACOBINISM,
ITS CRIMES,
CRUELITIES AND PERFIDIES,
FROM
THE COMMENCEMENT
OF THE
FRENCH REVOLUTION,
TO THE
DEATH OF ROBESPIERRE:

COMPRISING

An INQUIRY into the Manner of Disseminating, under the
Appearance of PHILOSOPHY and VIRTUE, PRINCIPLES
which are equally subversive of ORDER, VIRTUE, RELI-
GION, LIBERTY and HAPPINESS.

VOL. I.

BY WILLIAM PLAYFAIR,

AUTHOR OF THE COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL ATLAS, &c.

Why have you deceived me? Your Rights of Man were only a snare laid to
make Frenchmen fall, that they might the more easily be assassinated. I pity
those who call themselves Citizens, and who shed torrents of the blood of
citizens. O crime! when they have shed blood, they dance round their vic-
tim; they contemplate with a dry eye the last convulsion; they approach
nearer to indulge their ears with the last groan.

KLOPSTOCK to the National Assembly of France.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. WRIGHT, N^o. 169, PICCADILLY.

1798.

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HISTORY OF JACOBINISM

ITS CRIMES

CRUELTY AND TERRORS

THE CONSEQUENT

FRENCH REVOLUTION

DEATH OF ROBESPIERRE



BY WILLIAM PITT-RIVERS

THE HISTORY OF JACOBINISM, ITS CRIMES, CRUELTY AND TERRORS, THE CONSEQUENT FRENCH REVOLUTION, DEATH OF ROBESPIERRE. BY WILLIAM PITT-RIVERS. LONDON: PRINTED FOR J. WILSON, 1854.

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PREFACE

TO THE

P U B L I C.

SINCE the following work has been in the press, a publication on the French revolution has appeared from the pen of Dr. Moore, in the Dedication of which, addressed to his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, the author contrives to procure a sort of testimony of his impartiality. Had this declaration of impartiality come directly from the author himself, it would have been unnecessary to have noticed it; but this praise, he says, came from a near connection of his Grace, whom he met with in a foreign country.

It is evident, that the elegant and accomplished Duchefs is meant to be understood as being the person to whom this allusion is

made ; and the world at large may be apt to think, that the species of impartiality to which the Doctor lays claim, on account of the compliment paid to him, was that praiseworthy impartiality which, in cases of doubt or uncertainty, suspends opinion.

The learned Doctor gives the world to understand, through the medium of a dedication to his Grace, that his first work on the revolution of France was such a production, that democrats thought him an aristocrat, and aristocrats called him a democrat.

Upon this the Doctor makes his own commentary, and in doing so is exceedingly favourable to himself, by insinuating that candour and impartiality are always liable to this hard fate.

With respect to the opinion of aristocrats, respecting the Doctor's democracy, it would be wrong and absurd to dispute it, because there are no grounds for going upon in doing so ; and as for the opinion of democrats, there are so many different classes of them, that it would be strange indeed, if some of those classes should not find the Doctor too much

much of an aristocrat. Brissot and Petion, and even Hebert, (who murdered the amiable friend of the Dukes of Devonshire, the man who murdered the Princess of Lamballe) were all accused of favouring royalty; so that it is not impossible that the Doctor might be suspected by such persons of being too much attached to government and order.

I should think it improper to take any notice of this Dedication, were it not in very legible characters a declaration, that all those persons who shew themselves decided in their opinion with regard to the revolution, *are guided by partiality and prejudice.*

Whether it was a banter, or a compliment, which the relation of his Grace meant to bestow on the Doctor, I cannot pretend to determine; but I confess I am inclined to think, that it was not intended as a compliment. I am just as much at a loss to know with what intention he has retorted the equivocal upon the Duke, by claiming his patronage in a dedication, in which he plainly says, that he cannot decide between the murderers and their victims, between order and anarchy, between crime and misfortune.

The judge who condemns may be as impartial as the judge who acquits, but the judge who, with full evidence before him, forms no opinion at all, puts up a singular sort of claim to impartiality. When Robertson spoke of the cruelties of the Spaniards in Mexico, and Gibbon of the crimes of Roman emperors, they condemned, like men, actions which disgraced mankind. They did more still, they condemned the governments that permitted such iniquities, and they spoke with indignation of that love of gold, and that corruption of manners, which led to such disgraceful excesses. Like Addison, they thought that to be neutral in such a cause was a crime, and they would have joined in saying, with the austere and virtuous Roman,

I should have blush'd, if Cato's house had stood
Aloof, or flourish'd in a civil war.

The Doctor, ambitious perhaps of beginning a new career in history, means to separate causes and effects, for he takes care, while he makes the sacrifice to decency, of condemning the massacres, not to hint at the first causes of those excesses, although that is one of the professed objects of his publication. This conduct may appear to some
to

to be like that of the French heroes themselves, who, though they disapprove of individual acts of cruelty, never shew any disapprobation of the principles and opinions which led to them.

As the Doctor did not, probably, intend to give the world merely what is to be found in the Gazettes, he should have endeavoured to shew whether *there is, or is not*, any connection between the principles by which the revolutionists are guided, and the crimes which they have committed; it would have been a very great satisfaction to know the opinion of an *impartial writer* on this important subject, and to know whether the principle of revolt, as laid down in the Rights of Man, *had, or had not*, any connection, with the sacred revolts which brought a virtuous king to the scaffold, and a whole nation to misery and want. Brissot was more frank than the Doctor, and told us plainly, that the holy duty of insurrection, when ill applied, leads to anarchy and misery.

An English nobleman can scarcely think it an honour to be supposed to patronise a work, the author of which boasts that he is so free
from

from prejudice, that his readers cannot find out; whether he approves most of those who pillaged, plundered, and massacred the nobility of France, or of those who were pillaged and plundered. The Doctor, as a modern philosopher, may look with indifference on the events of this world, and see the murderers and the murdered with the same eye, or the spoilers and the spoiled; but in his quality of an abstract philosopher, it is difficult to conceive why he preferred dedicating his work to the Duke, when it might have been done with just as much propriety to the old woman who sells ballads and oranges under his Grace's wall; for as he balances between the nobleman and the *fans culotte*, there can be no evident *moral* reason for preferring the nobleman. As to the *material advantages, the advantages of truckling commodity*, that's another affair, and is best known to the Doctor himself.

The French Jacobins have one good rule amongst many bad ones, and English noblemen would not do amiss if they were to adopt the same rule—"We fear our open enemies less, and we hate them less," say the Jacobins,

cobins, "than those *gens gris* * who are of "no decided opinion." The doctor professes himself to be one of those *grey gentry* who are useless to all parties, dangerous to all parties, and scouted by all parties.

But though the compliment paid to the Duke in this Preface is equivocal, as applied to the person to whom it is addressed, the intention of the addresser is abundantly evident, as it regards himself; for as it is not to be supposed that the Duke accepted of the Dedication without knowing the nature of the work, (though it is very probable he did) it leads indirectly to the conclusion, that one of the first noblemen of England for rank and fortune, and for the reputation of an honest man, is as undecided about the merits of the French murderers as the man whom he appears to protect. Such a manœuvre is not unworthy of a real Jacobin, and if the Doctor had not accused himself of belonging to the *grey squad*, I should have done him the honour of putting him in the class of frank Jacobins, whom, I own, I do not dislike so much as that non-descript fail-

* Alluding to the colour grey, which is neither black nor white.

lant,

lant, who conceals his want of feeling under the appearance of impartiality.

With regard to myself, I own that I should be ashamed to have it doubted on which side of the question I am, when speaking of limited monarchy compared with French republicanism, founded on their declaration of the rights of man.

I neither deprecate, nor despise criticism; I expect it, and I know I am within its reach. I know that there is a periodical publication,* which watches with *critical* care to attack whoever presumes to meddle with Jacobinism. An attack upon me is, therefore, a matter of course: only let those, who set about it, recollect, that the French nation itself has begun to turn against Jacobins, and treats them worse now than ever I did, though I have

* The publication here alluded to, is to be considered as one of the periodical efforts, made by writers on the side of French liberty. It seems to have three objects in view, to bring down its more candid rivals, to bespatter all who write on the side of monarchical government, and to protect publications that come from a certain quarter. England is the only country in Europe where fame and falsehood are sold out by the sheet at regular periods, and where the oracles, as in times of old, conceal their persons, but proclaim aloud their temples.

excited their criticism and severe reproach for saying, that peace could not be made with Jacobins. Well, the French nation says the same thing now, that I did then; and will, before long, say what I do now: *that the absurd and dangerous declaration of the rights of man must be exploded; and that, in order to avoid the last excesses of Jacobins, it will be necessary to abandon and disclaim their first principles.*

June 4th, 1795.

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PREFACE.

P R E F A C E.

AS I have frequently obtruded myself upon the notice of the public by writing against the Jacobins; as I have been held up by some of those persons, who, under the protection of an anonymous criticism, have attributed to me motives which probably might seem to them natural ones, judging of others by themselves; I consider it as a sort of justice I owe to the public and to myself, to shew, that when I wrote about the Jacobins, I knew something of my subject, that when I wrote against them, I had the reasons which I alledged, and that I am a greater advocate for liberty than those who call themselves reformers and patriots. Though I have a sovereign contempt for those persons who make so free with the truth as to say that I am paid by government; or, that because I am of opinion that it is impos-

fible to make a proper peace with the Jacobins, I am a promoter of eternal war.

I appeal, therefore, to the history of the sect against which I have written, to shew that the most disorderly and cruel despotism was exercised under the appearance of liberty and justice; that far from being an enemy to liberty, I am its friend, though I do not chuse to join in the general deception that has been practised with regard to what has been called French liberty.

If those supporters of the French system were to be attacked with the same decisive tone of voice that its enemies have been, they would certainly be called advocates of despotism; for though they might be imposed upon during the first two years of the revolution, they scarcely can be supposed not to have opened their eyes since. The admirers of Bailly, of Rabaut, and Barnave, can they be admirers of their murderers? The Brissotins, can they admire the party of Robespierre? and, finally, when one flood of murderers followed another flood in succession, like the waves of the sea; and when wearied out with
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their own excesses, the party of Robespierre, and the Jacobin club itself has been destroyed; when the whole of France is filled with astonishment and drenched in blood, by the abominable system against which I write; can it yet have any advocates? No, it can have no sincere ones, and I can venture to say, that there is not a man in Europe who knows any thing of the matter, who will not confess that it has been a system of abominable cruelty and despotism, under the false appearance of liberty.

Those persons, then, who, in defiance of example, are still the advocates of this plan of government; must excuse me if I attribute to them other motives than a love of liberty; I shall change my opinion if any one of them will stand up, and either refute my arguments, or deny my facts; I challenge no man through bravado, nor an idea of possessing any superior abilities, but I defy the whole set of Jacobin amateurs in the present case; I trust only to truth and justice for victory.

Uniform in my attachment to the cause of order and of liberty, I have been, and I shall always remain, reserving to myself, however, the right of differing from those who mistake the shadow for the reality, and the name for the thing. I do not consider virtue to consist in the simple manners and republican phrases of a Brissot, and I have told him so to his face; nor do I conceive liberty to consist in a systematic disobedience of law, and invasion of property, which I always conceived the Jacobin system to be, and so I always plainly expressed myself to Jacobins themselves, till all law being overturned, there did not remain even the shadow of protection, and when open force put an end to argument.

I am an enemy to violent reforms, and of consequence a friend to those smaller reforms, which, without touching the main principles of the constitution, keep it pure; and I confess that it is not without considerable mortification, that I see a sort of indifference with respect to smaller abuses, which at last bring on a general change of things.

The

The following history is intended as much to shew, that abuse of power and disregard to public opinion brings on revolutions, as to shew the danger that attends them when they are brought on. When abuses in the administration of justice creep in, which it is the business of the legislature to reform, but which it will not reform, then men are naturally led to wish for a reform in the legislature itself. Had the court of Versailles been willing to make the reforms wanted, it would not have been itself reformed and destroyed. Had the nobility and the clergy been willing to sacrifice to the just claims of their fellow citizens, those privileges which were useless and unjust, we should not now have seen them straying like vagabonds over the face of a strange country seeking for bread. It is impossible for a lesson to be written in more legible characters, and it must be confessed, that till the Parliament of England shews a disposition to crush the abuses which exist and augment in many departments of the state, the mouths of those who cry out for reform will never be effectually stopt. Such would be the way effectually to crush Jacobinism, as it would have been the way to prevent its ever

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existing ;

existing ; and until it is put in practice, Jacobinism never will effectually be crushed. It assumes many forms, and is so well adapted for deceiving, that reason will never completely get the better ; men will prefer a system that offers change to one, that preserves abuses, which, though known, are not attempted to be remedied, for when men are discontented, reason has not its full effect.

Men should learn to know, that if a disregard to experience and to what has hitherto existed is a dangerous thing, a too bigoted regard for precedent is dangerous also ; although the system of destroying all the old laws to establish an entirely new code is dangerous to the greatest degree, it is by no means well, to piece and patch eternally at old laws, and render justice so expensive, and the law so unintelligible, that men can never expect to obtain their right, except in matters of great importance.

There are but two voices in the kingdom on this head, and the one is that of the whole nation, lawyers excepted ; the other is the voice of
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the lawyers themselves only. Let our judges vindicate themselves, and root abuse up, so that the peaceable citizen may enjoy tranquillity; it is not by shewing a just indignation at the practices of a vile attorney now and then, whose imprudence, rather than his villainy, draws down punishment, but it is by putting it out of their power to commit such abuses; it is the cause that should be attended to rather than the effect. Our law lords will be listened to when they apply to parliament, and surely the people will be relieved from a great burthen.

If there are abuses in the church, let the clergy themselves set the example of a reformation, and then they will avoid those terrible consequences which are but too certain to arrive when force is resorted to.

A revolution is something like a battle, when it begins, a general desire of conquering the enemy is the only feeling, but in the course of the action, man comes to be opposed to man, and personal danger makes ferocity too often take place of what at the beginning was only the love of one's

country. Following the comparison still farther, pillage and plunder succeed to victory, and individual motives overtop the feeling of general interest.

Perhaps it may be considered by some, as making rather an apology for the infamies with which the history of the revolution is filled, to say that they are natural to revolutions ; but it is by no means meant as such, neither can it be fairly so construed. It is a melancholy fact, that in every great and wealthy nation there are numbers of men capable of the worst of crimes ; and a revolution, by letting loose the bonds which held society together, gives the weight and importance to the criminal and bold, which in other times are acquired by an attention to the duties of the peaceable citizen. To say, then, that horrors and villainies are natural to revolutions, is no more an apology for the perpetrations of the crimes, than to say, that where there is no law nor police in a country, there will be robbery and murder, would be making an apology for robbers and murderers.

That

That human nature furnishes men who will commit crimes during a revolution, is not so extraordinary as that their excesses should be defended by men in other countries, who are so feelingly alive to the smallest appearance of oppression that may take place in their own government.

The case is not one that requires any nicety of reasoning. Suppose that two or three persons have been banished from this country for practices that were unfavourable to government, and let it even be granted, that their punishment was too severe, yet it is not the men who have seen with indifference above 900 persons put to death in one month in Paris, where fifty at a time crowded in one accusation, and who did not know each other; persons under the age of sixteen and above that of eighty, mounted this same scaffold, enveloped promiscuously in the same judgment.

A government that committed such crimes is the object of the admiration of certain men; the same government which punished with an unjust severity, was guilty of permitting the horrible cruelties

cruelties at Nantes, at Lyons, and over the whole country; cruelties for which there did not exist any name, in any language, until their perpetrators invented, by way of ironical pleasantry, names which will eternize their infamy,* and astonish posterity.

I say that it is more extraordinary, that there are men to vindicate the system which has led to such crimes, than that men were found capable of committing them; but it is still more strange, that they should be the same men who are so tremblingly alive to whatever may appear to be rigour in the government of this country.

Such men will say, that the excesses of Carrier, of the revolutionary tribunal, and the massacres of the month of September, were not the acts of government. I first begin with maintaining, and shall prove it in the course of this work, that they were just as much the acts of the government as any other acts since the 10th of August; but even if they were not, is it not the business of

* Noyades, Baignades, Deportation, Vertical Deportation, Republican Mariage, &c.

government to protect men from such things ? or does it deserve the name of government, which does not afford protection against such injustice ?

In following the manœuvres of the Jacobins, we find them changing shape every time there is any occasion ; when it is their view to be cruel and ferocious, they talk of justice and the general good, of the sword of the law falling upon the heads of the guilty. When it is not their immediate aim to seek victims, they speak of patriotism oppressed, and *errors committed through an excess of virtue and zeal*, and not from bad intention. Thus Hebert, and Danton, and Brissot, changed their language, when from oppressors they thought they were oppressed ; and thus Talien, that commanded massacres at Bourdeaux, and of September at Paris ; Collot d'Herbois, the most cruel of all men, at Lyons ; and Barrere, who had alternately been subservient to all the factions, spoke of the tyranny of Robespierre. They were right in that, but they were wrong when they pretended to exempt themselves from having participated in those tyrannies ; and if there is
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now a more moderate system, it is only because it is their interest that it should be so.

When men differ in opinion, facts must be resorted to, and it is with this view that I appeal to facts, to prove that the first principles of the revolution have led to a horrible system of despotism under the appearance of liberty, and that those who are friends to the revolution, to whatever epoch of its existence they attach their admiration, are either ignorant of the subject, or they are themselves lovers of anarchy and despotism.

It is unfortunate for mankind, that the duration of the horrors of the revolution diminishes the impression which they make on men's minds. The execution of the Marquis de Favras made more impression upon the people at the time, than when in later times seventy victims mounted the scaffold in one single day; and when the ancient magistrates, known and revered for their exemplary lives, were executed by twenty-four at a time.

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In other nations the impression is likewise diminished, for as horror is always accompanied with astonishment, and astonishment with novelty, it follows, that not only the horror is greatly diminished as novelty wears off, but the system of France, since the fall of Robespierre, is called a mild and moderate one: three years ago it would have been accounted terrible. Such is the effect of habit on the minds and feelings of mankind!

In proportion as men feel less abhorrence for the crimes of the revolution, it becomes more and more necessary to expose them in their full extent; and to shew, that under the outward appearance of patriotism and virtue, men may be led to participate in every sort of crime, and lay a foundation for a series of horrors, to which they can fix no bounds nor termination.

Disorder must naturally be prolonged greatly by that corruption of manners which is the consequence of it, and no term can be looked for but that which fatigue and depression of every kind will at last bring on, when some tyrant or other

will seat himself in the throne, and the government of one will be preferred to that of many. It is not when a country is fatigued out with every sort of vexation and exertion, that men are capable of settling a free government, for which many things are absolutely necessary, that cannot be found in a nation at the end of a violent state of agitation. The fullen repose enjoyed under an arbitrary monarchy is the only thing that is practicable after anarchy has worn out and degraded a people. The reign of Robespierre could not have taken place in the first moments of the revolution; but Robespierre came too soon to reign long as a single despot, some more fortunate tyrant will fill his place on a future day, under whose yoke all parties will indiscriminately fall: it will then become the interest and the wish of that despot to enjoy some tranquillity himself, and let his people enjoy some repose. By this means a new system of order will in time arise, and it will be well for the nation, if in several ages after they arrive at something like liberty and happiness.

In the following history I have passed over, in a very flight manner, some of the most striking moments of the French revolution, because my only view has been to shew the results and consequences of the principles and practices of the revolutionists. I have endeavoured to shew, that the foundation of all the evils is to be found in the principle of perpetual insurrections, and the affiliations of clubs, which supported each other; for without the clubs insurrections would not have been so practicable, and without insurrection the clubs would have soon been destroyed.

It is rather extraordinary, that of all the boasted rights of man, that of insurrection (which, allowing even that it were a right, is a very unpleasant and inconvenient one) is the only one which the revolution seems to have fully established; for all the other rights have been most shamefully trampled upon and abused.

The revolution is not now half so interesting as in its first moments, because, though it is very curious and useful to know, how designing and wicked men brought it on, there is nothing very
curious

curious nor useful in observing those perpetual executions, plots, and conspiracies, which rise out of a state of depravity and confusion of interests. At the beginning of the revolution, its fate depended upon the conduct of a few individuals, and an accident might have perhaps put an end to the reign of anarchy, because disorder was not become the natural state of the majority of the inhabitants; but now the fall of a leader and of a whole party only makes room for more leaders and more parties.

There are in the interior of France at present above a million of its inhabitants who may be called brigands, or free-booters, and who cannot live but by disorder. Should peace be made, a million more will return from the armies, who will then be in the same situation. So that we may safely say, that one half the male inhabitants of France, who are of age, are and will be interested in maintaining the reign of disorder; the probability of its continuance can, therefore, not be very doubtful.

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I therefore, avowing my attachment to order and to liberty, such as we enjoy here in England, am an enemy to Jacobinism, and the revolution *in all its stages*, as being equally opposite to justice and real liberty; and it is to facts that I appeal to prove, that NO PORTION OF MANKIND HAS EVER BEEN LESS FREE NOR LESS UPON AN EQUALITY THAN UNDER THE MUCH-VAUNTED FORM OF A REPUBLIC.

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HISTORY OF JACOBINISM.

CHAP. I.

General circumstances that favoured the propagation of the Jacobin system.—Decline of the feudal system.—Changes in the state of society in Europe.—Nobles hated in the towns.—Causes why the clergy became obnoxious also.—Reasons for discontents against the government itself.—Novelty and innovation arise naturally from discontent with the state of things.

NO sect ever arose so suddenly, or carried its principles into practice with so much violence, rapidity, and success, as that of the Jacobins: in less than four years from its first rearing its head, this sect has overturned the first monarchy in Europe for extent, population, and riches; has made a complete revolution in property, both moveable and immoveable; overturned the religion and laws, and effected a total change in the manners of the people; so that the nation, which for its politeness and urbanity used to serve as a

model for others to copy from, is become an object of fear and horror, having turned savage and cruel, and trampled under foot whatever has been respected in ancient and modern times.

That confusion and disorder are easily brought about, is well known; that it is much easier to destroy than to create, was never doubted; but even destruction and ruin could not have been so completely accomplished in so short a time, had not the state of society, and the nature of things, been favourable to that ruin and destruction. When the hurricane comes, those trees which are most exposed by their situation, or rotten in themselves, fall first, and fall with violence; and so it was with France: for had not the nature of things in general, and many particular circumstances favoured the jacobinical efforts, violent as they were, their success could not have been so rapid.

Every religious sect, and every political system, had extended by degrees, and required ages and centuries to produce great effects, or extend widely, till in 1789 the Jacobins began their efforts; their leaders did not exceed a dozen in number, and in less than four months the foundations of a powerful monarchy, established during more than a thousand years, were undermined, and both the religious and political creed changed throughout the kingdom. The church

church of Rome, too, hitherto always encroaching on those who professed its faith, saw its authority denied, and its possessions invaded, whilst what remained of the feudal system was nearly done away. Want of time, and not want of power, alone prevented this work of invasion and destruction from, even then, being complete; what has followed since has not been less astonishing, and if the rage for destruction seems abated, it is only for want of materials to destroy.

To follow the rapid and wonderful course of these events, will be less our business, than to examine into, and search out, those extraordinary exertions, both open and concealed, which have been the causes of a revolution so unexampled in the history of mankind.

They must be ignorant, indeed, of the proportion which exists between human force and natural causes, who imagine that either the genius or efforts of men could have produced such a change, had not the nature of things been favourable to it. To use a familiar, but an apt expression, those revolutionists sailed with the wind and tide in their favour. Before, therefore, we begin to follow the Jacobin system, since it became visible and active, and began to predominate, we must search for those general and par-

ticular circumstances which preceded it, and were so much in its favour.

Our first object shall be to trace out the *general causes*, some of which we shall find not to be of a very recent origin. The particular circumstances existing in France at the time when this great revolution commenced, will come naturally next in order; we shall then have the canvas upon which the Jacobins set to work with such advantage.

When the incursions of the savage nations from the north had destroyed the Roman government in the west, the invaders wanted both the means and the inclination to establish another in its place. To be possessed of a richer soil, and enjoy a better climate than their own, was the first aim of the barbarians; which, when by force of arms they had wrested from the former masters of the world, they endeavoured to preserve, by extinguishing those arts and habits, which had, as they imagined, rendered the Romans effeminate and weak. It required but a small effort in savages to remain in a savage state; and thus the unpolished conquerors, mixed with the polished conquered, soon became a race of ignorant and unprincipled oppressors and oppressed.

The natural freedom of men who roamed about for existence, and who had by their bravery got possession

possession of those countries, which had formed but one state under the Roman government, did not admit of any regular or fixed obedience in times of peace to their chiefs, whom in war they had without murmuring followed and obeyed. Disorder and pillage amongst themselves were the natural fruits of this state of things, and protection, not against a distant and powerful foe, but against their neighbours, became absolutely necessary. Europe then became peopled with nations, perpetually employed in attacking the property of their neighbours, or defending their own; and from this state of things arose, by a progression very easily to be conceived, a sort of system, by which the lower classes were subservient to the lords or barons, in a manner very disgraceful to human nature, and which must have been very terrible to those who were obliged to submit to it. This which has been called the feudal system, extended all over Europe, and it is wonderful how nearly these small governments (for such they may not improperly be called) resembled each other, even in the most distant parts. In the south of France and the north of Scotland the rights of the proud baron were nearly the same.

The feudal system which was so universally established, and so completely put in force, was well adapted to the state of mankind at the time. It was natural that lands taken from their ancient

proprietors by the sword, should be preserved by it; as the fear of the old inhabitants reduced to slavery, but not exterminated, obliged the man who possessed the lands, and those who lived upon and cultivated them, to make one common cause in their defence. Thus the original tie between the landlord and the vassal was founded not only on mutual interest and advantage, but on absolute necessity. It is not to be wondered at, if, in times of gross ignorance, and when there were neither arts nor commerce, the vassals became totally submissive to those masters, to whose protection they looked up for safety, and upon whose bounty they depended for bread. This double claim made it extremely easy for the lords of lands to increase what they termed their rights; so that besides slaves, who were completely the property of their master, free-men, as they were called, became at last little better than slaves. In another place, when it will become our task to relate the horror and astonishment which an enumeration of those rights occasioned, we shall mention some of them; at present, it is sufficient to say, that the power of life and death, and of judging in all civil and criminal cases, lay in the ignorant barons, whose knowledge was confined to the art of war and plunder, and who placed their honour upon objects very different from that of administering impartial justice: men who even despised the knowledge necessary to

to render them capable of judging between their dependents, and who, though not ignorant of their own privileges, paid very little attention to the rights of others.

The feudal system, like many others, as it approached towards perfection (not perfection in goodness) in itself,* brought along with it the cause of its decline; for, being fully established, and having procured men some degree of security and repose, their condition ameliorated by degrees, they then became more wealthy, and the chiefs found it their interest to attach their followers to them by affection, rather than to trust to force alone; so that, towards the eleventh century, when the crusades engaged almost all the barons in Christendom, in an enterprise which cost them vast sums of money, and did not very immediately touch the interest of their vassals, as the petty wars between neighbours always had done, the lord became still more dependent upon the vassal both for money and personal assistance. Thus did the state of men become better by degrees; but from the feudal system, when in its full force, to any thing like liberty, the road is too long for that small progress to have been very perceptible.

* A system may be very perfect in itself if all the parts answer each other, although the whole may be founded in gross error and imperfection.

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During the same period, commerce and the population of towns had operated likewise in diminishing the rigour of feudal chief; but, in proportion as the proprietor felt his power disputed and curtailed, he employed himself in attaching his vassals or retainers to his person. The means of doing this, very fortunately for the chiefs, increased as it became more necessary; for, as riches and civilization advanced, the barons reaping the first fruits of both, had the means of increasing the attachments of their adherents both by gifts, and by exciting admiration and esteem. Men, as they become polished, attach themselves more easily from favours received; and it must not be forgotten that, during all this time, as the administration of justice remained in the hands of the barons, and as wars amongst neighbours, though diminished both in their violence and frequency, were not at an end, the protection of the chief was by no means become useless, although considerably diminished.

Thus, then, till towards the fifteenth century, the feudal system was supported by the mutual interest and the mutual inclination of the lord and the vassal; and, therefore, its evils and enormities, though felt, were submitted to without much murmuring; and though by this time the different kings of Europe had established their power on a pretty solid basis, yet, as the prince depended

depended upon his barons for support in war, he took care, while he endeavoured to weaken their privileges with respect to himself, not to touch too severely upon their power with the vassals, otherwise he might in the end have destroyed himself.

It was not, then, till Charles the Eighth of France established a standing army, the first in modern Europe, that the barons felt their importance with their prince and with their vassals equally diminished. Soldiers regularly disciplined, and constantly paid, were far superior to labourers taken from their usual occupations. This inferiority was soon felt, and soon followed by great effects; the sovereign soon set in earnest about humbling the haughty lords, on whom he no longer totally depended, and whom individually he was now able to reduce to obedience. Occasions were found where the oppressed vassal appealed to his sovereign, and many exertions of power were found to have originated in superior strength, and neither in natural right, in mutual agreement, nor in mutual interest.

The manners of the times still, however, favoured feudal authority to a great degree. The proprietors of lands lived upon their estates, and continued to have many dependents from affection or from fear. The money arising from the
rents

rents of land was spent amongst those who cultivated them, and even a considerable portion in entertaining them ; so that there seemed to be a very intimate connection, both in interest and good services, between the proprietor and those who lived on his estate. This was, perhaps, in the progression of things one of the most happy periods ; it was not, it is true, the golden age, nor was it a refined one, but was a hospitable one. That ferocity of manners which makes hatred and fear predominate in the human breast, had disappeared ; men began to have many of the conveniencies and some of the luxuries of life, and that social feeling of man to man, which is one of the most agreeable of which our nature is capable, was felt without alloy ; a feeling which in our present state of false refinement, and luxurious misery, we seldom have. Let us dwell a moment on that happy period in the history of the human race, when half the people of a county assembled with their lord to enjoy the banquet, or share the sports of the field ; when mutual affection and mutual utility encouraged bounty, and sweetened obedience ; when neither a difference of manners, nor of interests, separated the landlord and the tenant so widely, as to destroy those enjoyments which both could partake of, and enjoy together.

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This was a happy, but from its nature not a durable state of things. The landlord, as he lost his own importance, became himself the vassal of his king, and followed the court, from which he, in his turn, sought favour, or implored protection; so that by degrees, neither his revenues, which were spent in following the court, nor the personal accomplishments, nor the protection of the lord, served to attach his tenants to his fortune or his person. The connection became then merely a mercenary one, and the proprietor of the grounds was little known but by the harsh and hard exactions of his steward,* or by his arbitrary and domineering conduct, and when as if by accident the master paid a visit to the festive hall of his ancestors, it was but a disgusting exhibition of luxury, pride, and effeminacy, which only served in general to augment the discontent and humiliate the feelings of his tenants. This last change may be dated from the time that Louis XIV. came to the throne; and it is from that time, that whatever was absurd or unjust in the feudal laws was called to mind, and the rights of the lord (*les droits du seigneur*) were held up as an object of hatred and ridicule.

* In France the bailli, who very absurdly had the power of administering justice in inferior cases, in his master's absence; during the last century they were in many cases always absent. The baillies were a great curse.

Happily

Happily for England, this picture applies to it but very imperfectly for many reasons, of which the first certainly is, that our constitution having reduced every subject to the same level as a man, what was absurd or unjust in the feudal laws has been done away; neither is English hospitality in the country yet at an end. Our rich proprietors receive a better education than they did in France, and comprehend much better the mutual obligations of landlord and tenant. The size of England too, and the superior conveniency of travelling, is in our favour; and a portion of the year is always spent in the country; whereas in France, many nobles never visited their distant estates at all; and as from our court there is less to hope and *much less to fear*, it is not necessary even for the courtier to be always there. Let us rejoice that this is so, and join in wishing that it may continue, *for the personal weight and influence of men of property on their estates is one of the closest, and certainly one of the most pleasant bonds by which order and subordination in society are upheld.*

Although the feudal lords in France had thus lost every kind of real importance with their tenants; by a sort of folly which it is difficult to account for, they had preserved the absurd power which they possessed in former times, although the exercise of it was generally in a great

great measure laid aside: this served to humiliate and displease one part of the human race, while it was no service to the other, and only occasionally gave rise to individual acts of oppression and insult.

During the former order of things, that is, till the revolution, all murmurs or discontents about feudal rights were stifled, but we shall soon see with what dangerous consequences it was attended; for some of the feudal laws and customs were as good and wise as others were bad; the same fate, however, as in most cases of innovation, awaited both: all were destroyed, and what is worse, the legal invasion of property began, and a door opened for most of those invasions which we are to see the history of in the present work. The worst of feudal rights border upon ravishment, robbery, and murder; and there are others as sacred, as fair, and as much founded in wisdom, as any other of the laws respecting hereditary property: how dangerous was it then to comprise under one name, rights of so different a nature, which endangered the possession of all property, and put in question the equality of man; a question so dangerous, if improperly handled and if ill understood!

Let rich men and lawgivers learn from this, that it is not enough to make good laws, that useless

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or improper ones *should be repealed*; it is not enough that they condescend not to put what is useless or unjust in force; they ought to renounce the power of doing it, and the good and wholesome laws, and a good constitution, will not have to fear reproach on account of bad laws, nor be endangered by their application. In the moral, as well as the natural world, the rotten often carries the sound along with it; and it is probable that if there is any efficacious receipt for preventing revolutions, it is an attention to this circumstance.

Whilst the proprietors of land had lost their importance, and their old friends in the country, they had acquired no new ones in the towns. Their time was spent in following a court, where they acted only the part of dependents, and their money in paying servants who felt for them no personal attachment, or in other expenses and pleasures, which being generally carried beyond their power to pay, rendered them contemptible, and created them enemies,

It is to be added to this, that ever since the days of Louis XIV. the nobility and gentry (*les nobles. et la petite noblesse*) had been in the habit of running into scandalous and enormous expenses, which, instead of paying, they availed themselves of their credit at court to be exempted from paying

ing their creditors, whom they found various means of harraffing, tormenting, or evading. But the noble did not, in leaving his inferiors in the country, to follow and cringe before his superiors at court, leave his pride behind him; for every petty privilege that gave a sort of superiority at public places, was kept up with an invidious industry. All places of honour or profit in church and state, were occupied, as were also those in the navy and the army, by the nobility; and the *roturier*, as he was called, by way of contempt, learned from his infancy to hate a race of men who seemed born only to humiliate and oppress the simple citizen.

It is a fortunate circumstance for such persons as possess honours and privileges which they do not merit, when they have good sense or modesty sufficient to let them remain forgotten; but the noble in France had not this advantage under the most affable and familiar outward shew, he reminded his inferiors of their relative situations, and of *his* nobility. If such was the case in the common affairs of society, when any real affair was on the carpet, it was fifty times worse; then the *roturier* was sure to feel and pay dear for his inferiority, and in case of an injury received, redress was generally out of his reach; if he appealed to the king in council, he had ten chances to one against him, and in parliament or court of

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justice,

justice, composed of nobles who thought it not below their dignity to be solicited by those who had causes to determine (except in such flagrant cases as would have thrown open discredit upon the judges,) the supplicating noble had always the better chance.

Could the noble for one day have laid aside the prejudices with which he had been brought up; and could he have calculated, like a wise and reasonable man, how ill it became his dignity, how useless it was to his interest, and how hurtful to society, that such privileges should exist, he certainly would have blushed for himself, and have abandoned them for ever; but this moment of reflection never came, or if it did, it was when it was too late.

Those errors into which the nobles of France in general fell, more through want of thought than bad intentions, only served at the end to heap coals of fire upon their heads; for every thing, either ridiculous or unjust, was enregistered in the minds of their enemies, and proclaimed at last with a loud voice; nobody could defend such abuses, and the order of the noblesse, instituted for good reasons at first, and still useful under proper regulations, became odious and despised.

We shall frequently have occasion to remark, how essential it is for the peace of society, to prevent the advocates of anarchy from having the appearance of reason on their side, as by that they bring over to their party the innocent and the well-intentioned.

During the above period, the power of the clergy, formerly so great, had experienced a diminution, so far as it depended on opinion, not very unlike that which we have been describing relative to the order of nobles; and this fall in their importance had arisen from the conduct of its members being neither adapted to the original spirit of the religion which they professed, nor to the nature of the times in which they were living.

In the dark ages, when the precepts of our Lord and Saviour were first preached over the far greater portion of Europe, many abuses crept in, which in those dark, ignorant, and superstitious times, tended rather to astonish and create respect than otherwise. The apparent austerity and manners of the clergy, their superior knowledge and learning; but, above all, *l'esprit du corps*, with which they were all filled, kept up the interests of the church with increasing brilliancy and reputation for many centuries. The lower orders of the priests, crafty and interested, insinuated themselves into the good graces of individuals; and as

independent of the advantages of superior education and riches, they had their time at their command, they improved with great assiduity those moments of weakness when men are ready to grant to their priests what they feel they owe to their God. Thus the church grew in riches, in power and in pride. This unnatural order of things could not be permanent, the increase of knowledge, and the neglect which ultimately attends whatever is not intrinsically good, must have in time brought it to an end, but many circumstances hastened its fall.

Many of the ceremonies of the Church of Rome began to be considered as useless parade, and the wealth and luxury of the dignified clergy, who appeared in days of ceremony before the public in a blaze of gold, but ill imitating the poverty, and simplicity of life of their Divine Master : were now looked upon as a reproach to themselves, and an insult to those who contributed to their support.

The progress which the Protestant religion had made, the industry and happiness of those who professed it, as well as the good sense of men, which begins to exert itself as soon as the barriers of superstition are broken down, promoted an inquiry into the origin, as well as the application of such prodigious wealth, and it was

was soon discovered that it had arisen from a systematical warfare, carried on at all times and on every occasion by the members of the Romish Church, upon the minds and property of the weak and superstitious. Often had the widow and the orphan been reduced to beggary to support the licentious and sinful indolence of a convent. The application of the immense revenues of the church, amounting to near twenty-five millions sterling, when examined into, was found to be not more pure than their origin; the far greater portion being employed to pay the high clergy, who were enormously rich, or to maintain indolent and luxurious monks; and a very small part applied to the payment of the poor and virtuous curates, who did all the hard duties of the church, though they received so few of its good things.

Many of the high clergy went into all the fashionable vices of the age, one of which was to turn religion itself into ridicule, at the same time that they neglected most of those moral duties which are imposed on every member of society, but more particularly on men whose business ought to be to instruct and improve others by their precepts and by their example.

The selfishness of the clergy, in matters of interest, was but ill calculated to conciliate the minds of their fellow citizens, who considered,

that if men in a state of celibacy required so much money, and were so tenacious of its possession, those who had families to maintain, and were obliged to pay them, were but in a pitiable state.

It may not here be amiss to observe, that one thing which in former times was so well planned for the aggrandisement of the church of Rome, tended at last to accelerate its fall. The poverty of that portion of the clergy, consisting of men who were continually going like poor dependents, or honourable beggars, into people's houses, and who were to be found at every table, even sharing his crust and salad with the peasant, though formerly respected as being of superior knowledge and breeding to the master of the house, now excited a mixture of pity and contempt; they now appeared ignorant, vulgar, and cringing, and even amongst the very inferior class of citizens, were become objects of ridicule; so that those emissaries who formerly were very useful as the spies and runners of their superiors, now drew down upon the whole body of the clergy a share of that contempt which their own conduct and behaviour inspired.

To such as have never been in a Roman Catholic country, this picture may appear exaggerated, but it so happens, that (without pretending to

to enter into the merits of the two branches of the same religion) there is not to be found in any Protestant country, men who resemble those of whom we speak.* The poorest curate in England; speaking in a general manner, is a character greatly superior, and in spite of his cottage, his ragged children, and his scanty income, there is no comparison between them as to dignity of character, and even in politeness of behaviour. The feeling, too, which every man has towards the Protestant curate, on reflecting that he has the same interest with himself, that he has a family and a home, and is not continually prowling for food, and meddling with the people's affairs, is greatly in his favour.

The policy of the Church of Rome has generally been very profound, and there is not a doubt but that the ceremonies of its religion would have experienced some changes, according to the spirit of the times, had it not unfortunately been one of its tenets that the sovereign pontiff was infallible; any change or modification would therefore have been inconsistent with the articles of its faith, it therefore was necessary to leave things as they

* So much were this set of low abbés disliked, though people tolerated them, that it was a vulgar and general belief that they brought ill luck to every house they frequented, and probably this belief had a more real foundation than the prejudice that some people have against *black cats*.

were; and though the head of the church had the prudence, in general, to set aside, without remorse or ceremony, what did not suit the times, many of the clergy in their own parishes had not that good sense,* and by this means drew down still more displeasure and contempt upon those who were very relaxed in their observance of their own duties, and very rigorous towards others.

It was not unnatural that the French should embrace the first opportunity to copy their rivals, the English, and their neighbours, the inhabitants of Switzerland, in curtailing a little the forms of their religion; and we shall accordingly see, that they did not let the first occasion slip, but in this, as in all other things, they did not know where to stop, and instead of reforming, rooted out all religion, and at once became as intolerant to the clergy and their doctrines, as they had formerly been to those who presumed to differ from those doctrines. The French nation has disgraced itself at all times by the extremes into which it has run, and the massacre of the Protestants, in the time of Charles the Ninth, is of the two less dis-

* When the curate of St. Sulpice, in Paris, refused Christian burial to the body of Voltaire, the old Marechal Duc de Richelieu observed, "that curate is an old woman who does not understand his trade (*c'est un cagot*) he should have pretended to have converted Voltaire, and received him into the church, all the parish would then have taken it for a miracle, and believed more than ever."

graceful than that of Sept. 1792, under the auspices of the Jacobin faction. The former was less disgraceful, as being by the orders of a single despot, and executed upon men of a different persuasion, than for the whole of France to sit down peaceably and quietly with the imputation of having in cool blood massacred their own priests, without even a shadow of complaint against them. In the former case, the orders of a cruel king were executed by his trembling slaves; in the latter, a portion of the people, as volunteers, converted themselves into monsters, and executed, with a hardy and unrelenting cruelty, their abominable intentions, without the plea either of necessity or of ignorance. The guilty hand which signed the order for the murder of the Protestants, could set a term to the massacre, but a nation converted into murderers, knows not how nor where to stop; this should be a lesson to those who stir up the people, and may serve as a sort of answer to those who are continually speaking of the vice and depravity of kings, and of the virtues of republicans.*

If the people at large were prepared for adopting, with pleasure, a change in the feudal and religious systems, to which may be attributed, in a

* These were the common topics of the Democratic leaders for the first three years, till Robespierre silenced all parties at once by his travelling guillotine.

great degree, the ease and rapidity with which Jacobin principles spread, we shall find that they were not less indisposed against the forms of government itself, which gradually had become liable to many objections.

The French nation was originally one of the freest in Europe ; but not to go farther back than the time of Charlemagne, the right of the people to be represented by their deputies, at the assembly of the states general, was a sort of magna charta, as no taxes could lawfully be laid on without the consent of this assembly. Here was a clear and solid foundation laid for the rights and liberties of the subject. It would be tedious and foreign to our subject, to shew by what stratagems this privilege had been set aside, and that assemblies which should have been held twice a year, were not held once in a century ; and that even when called, their purpose was defeated by the intrigues of the court, which set the representatives of the different orders at variance.

How bad kings abused uncontrolled power, is not to be inquired into, because it cannot be doubted ; but without seeking farther back than Louis XIV. we shall see how he involved his people in war, and loaded them with taxes, for his whims, his pleasures, or his vengeance ; how to the miseries of expensive wars he added the injustice
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and cruelty of proscribing some hundred thousands of his most industrious subjects, by revoking the edict of Nantz; how he established on a more firm basis than ever the right of banishing or imprisoning his subjects by letters de cachet, for which punishments his sovereign will and pleasure was the only reason he had to give: added to all this, the abuses already spoken of amongst the nobles and the clergy being protected by the crown, the latter shared in the odium incurred by the other two.

The minds of men were thus prepared for a new order of things by those general causes, which had been increasing in force for so many centuries; to these we have yet to add the more recent and more particular causes that operated at the time when the revolution broke out, and certainly our surprise at its violence and rapidity will be very considerably diminished, when we find so many causes operating, *in one direction*, and that direction in favour of novelty, and under the idea of procuring happiness and liberty.

CHAP. II.

Ruinous consequences of the borrowing system—Mr. Necker comptroller-general—His pride and ambition—Madame Necker's hatred to the nobility—Bad policy of the court, with respect to Mr. Necker's administration—Mons. de Calonne succeeds him—Calonne's mistakes—The finances ruined—Calonne's disgrace—The Notables—States General proposed as the only means of arranging the finances—General discontents increase—American war, its consequences upon the public mind—Archbishop of Sens minister—His blunders—Duke of Orleans chief of a faction—Necker recalled.

IN addition to those general causes which had more or less operated a change of opinion all over Europe, with respect to the laws and government, we have to enumerate such others as were felt only in France ; or which at least had no immediate connection with the other nations of Europe.

The mode adopted by France, as well as by some other nations, of borrowing money to defray the expenses of war, it is obvious to every reasoning and calculating man, if not used with wisdom and moderation, is not only capable of bringing about revolution, but must inevitably do

do so. As the advantages resulting from war (when any do result, which is not always the case) are generally but temporary and small;* and as the burdens laid upon the people to pay the interest of loans are permanent and great, they naturally accumulate and increase. The power or capacity of bearing burdens is limited in every nation, but there is no limit to the embarrassments that may be brought on by borrowing; on the contrary, the more that a remedy for the evil becomes necessary, the more difficult does its application become, and that not in a simple but in a compound proportion. A multiplication of taxes not only draws the money from the industrious, but by augmenting the number of the agents of government, is vexatious, and diminishes the number of productive labourers.† It diminishes also the value of money, and thereby renders what may be called the *efficient portion* of the revenue insufficient, so that the wants and the embarrassments of the state are augmented with regard to the daily expenses.

* The proper object of war is not to procure advantage, but to prevent loss. Robbers only make war to gain by it, therefore it is not fair, nor does the fact justify any calculation of gain resulting from war. The burdens are; therefore, in fact, only so much actual loss without any deduction.

† See the great Adam Smith's definition of productive labourers in his book on the *Wealth of Nations*.

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The manner in which both France and England have seen their expenditures increase, is a proof of the justness of what we have been remarking; for since the beginning of the borrowing plan, their annual expenses have increased beyond any former example.

The revenues of England, at our revolution in 1688, amounted to scarcely two millions a year; at that time our debts were too inconsiderable to be mentioned, so that the annual expenses were under two millions. Since we began borrowing money, not only have we contracted an annual expense of ten millions for interest, but our yearly expenses amount at present to more than five millions, for what we call a peace establishment,* that is to say, twice and a half its amount only one hundred years ago.

In France, the progression would have been nearly the same as to expenditure as it has been in England, had not a bankruptcy during the

* It is in vain to lay this diminution of the value of money, as many people do, to the increase of the quantity of gold and silver in Europe alone; first of all, because in many countries, where gold and silver are not wanting, it has not taken place; and likewise, as at the time when South America was first discovered, and more gold came than at any other period of equal duration, the depreciation was not so rapid as it has been since loans and paper came in use.

minority of Louis XV. under the regency of the Duke of Orleans, reduced the debts contracted in the time of Louis XIV. so that, though their practice of borrowing began nearly thirty years before we adopted the same method in England, the beginning of the present debt of France may be dated rather from the year 1722, than from the arrival of Louis XIV. to the throne, at which time their revenues amounted to five millions sterling;* before the revolution they amounted to twenty millions sterling; but as the expenditure exceeded the revenue about two millions and a half, we should say twenty-two millions and a half.†

Besides the bankruptcy in the time of the regency, a great portion of the loans made in France consisted in life annuities (*rentes viageres*),‡ therefore the debts of France did not accumulate so rapidly as our's, which accounts for their expenditures not increasing so rapidly, and adds

* One hundred and twenty-five millions Tournois in the year 1665.

† Four hundred and eighty millions revenue, and five hundred and thirty-five millions Tournois of expenditure, in 1788.

‡ The ultimate advantage of borrowing on annuities is very great, but it cannot be done to great extent in England. A sinking fund, equal to five per cent. on the capital borrowed, however, answers the same purpose. See a Comparison between Annuities and Perpetual Loans, by Mr. Playfair, published in 1786 by Debrett, Piccadilly.

weight to what we have asserted with respect to the evil tendency of perpetual loans for temporary purposes.

The increase of the expenses of government, and consequently of the burdens upon the people, is in any state attended with great inconveniences and hardships; not only does the mode of levying the taxes become vexatious, complicated, and oppressive, but all transactions with other nations, in the way of commerce, become less advantageous and more difficult; and as the price of every thing gradually increases,* the time is brought nearer when no farther sale of goods to other nations can be expected, on account of the highness of their price.

It would be tedious, and certainly here unnecessary, to dwell upon this subject, as we ourselves feel from experience, that every new loan of money is attended with many inconveniences; and as it is plain, that an accumulation of inconveniences must finish with destroying the system in which it arises; just as the man who has continually recourse to mortgaging his property, or his time, must in the end finish by ruining

* It is this that makes a bottle of good ale dearer now than a bottle of claret was in Scotland or Ireland thirty years ago.

himself, however great his resources may have originally been.

The taxes in France had increased to a degree that, under a bad administration and a despotic government, made them extremely heavy and vexatious.* The mode of letting them out to farm was, in every respect, distressing to the subject, and oppressive; for under an arbitrary government, what redress can an individual expect in case of injustice, by going to law with a company composed of sixty of the richest men in the kingdom, who held the court itself in dependence, by the advances made, or rather which they pretended to make?---Such was the company of farmers general in France, who employed 22,000 clerks, spies, and emissaries, who paid monthly into the royal treasury half a million sterling on account, and at the end of the year the balance of what might to be due to government. Oppression was not only to be dreaded, but expected from such a body;† and accor-

* A free people may bear equal burdens with much less inconvenience, because they know the amount of the evil, and, in cases of oppression, may expect justice.

† Without any imputation upon the judges, yet the forms of justice, and its expense, prevented the individual from getting his right. The farmers general had a clerk who defended all actions in their name, and without any trouble to themselves, the expense being no object to the company, the individual was ruined by delays and appeals from one court to another.

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dingly it existed, and discontents multiplied on all sides against the court, to the extravagance of which every evil was imputed.

From the time that Louis XIV. had adopted the method of raising money, by selling patents of nobility and places of every sort, men who were not born to honours or to riches, found themselves cut off from every fair chance of acquiring them, at the same time that they could not help observing, that when there were burdens to bear, they were thrown by preference upon their backs. The mortification arising from this was great; but what is unjust excites anger likewise; and unfortunately the former state of things in France afforded too many occasions for both.

As the court had become the slave of monied men, or what they termed financiers, but what we may venture to call by their proper name, money-lenders and usurers, so also had the nobles individually, with only a few exceptions. Their estates were generally mortgaged, or their revenues anticipated, by this usurious tribe, whom they hated, despised, and envied, at the same time that they were obliged to cringe to them for pecuniary aid.

Such had been the state of things in France during the long reign of Louis XV. and continued with

with only this difference, that it was gradually getting worse, till the American war begun, and hastened that revolution which without it would, perhaps, have been twenty years longer in coming to a head.

It will be necessary to go on with this relation, in order to enter into some details concerning M. Necker, who, while he was acquiring for himself popularity and reputation, as an able financier, honest man, and philosopher, was ruining the French nation, deceiving the world, and betraying his king.

Monf. Necker must certainly be considered as being one of the principal causes of the revolution breaking out when it did, and in the manner that it did. We shall at present only consider him as a finance minister; it will be our business on a future occasion to examine his conduct as a politician.

The management of the finances of France were entrusted to a minister who was called the comptroller general, who might either have a seat in the King's council, or not, as circumstances permitted and required. M. Necker, a Protestant and a stranger, when called to that important office, on account of his credit amongst the monied men, and his skill in operations in the

banking way as carried on in Paris, was not admitted to the honour of a seat in the King's council; and it is no small proof of the degraded state of the court, that it refused so necessary an honour where merit was acknowledged and obligation received.* There was a singular degree of want of policy, and, we may even say, of injustice, in refusing M. Necker a seat in council, where his presence, as being at the head of the finance, was so necessary; but, as M. Necker's ruling passion was ambition (to which his love of money was subservient), as this was well known, and that Madame Necker, a woman of no inconsiderable merit, and of a very decided character, was still more vain and ambitious than her husband, whom she governed, the imprudence of trusting them and humiliating them at the same instant, is beyond any common degree of folly.

Madame Necker was always an enemy to the ladies of the court, into whose circles she could

* M. Necker's merit was acknowledged by the very act of appointing him to the place, and, as he received no salary, the obligation was not to be denied *by those who had confidence in him*, though the fact was quite otherwise; it was the intrigues of the bankers in Paris that raised M. Necker to the comptrole generale, that he might favour their stock-jobbing manœuvres; and, as for salary, his own vanity was gratified by not receiving any, and the people were blinded with respect to his character; though, being partner in the banking house of Girardot and Haller, he could get more money by stock-jobbing in one day, than by his salary in ten years, had he received one.

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not be admitted. This hatred was no secret in Paris, any more than her influence with her husband. From two strangers, rich, vain, and exasperated, placed at the head of the deranged finances of the country, much good could not be expected; and assuredly, if their wrath was great, their vengeance has been greater still; it has succeeded beyond any other example.

M. Necker began his administration by making his court to the people, and he at last got public opinion entirely on his side, by setting the example of publishing an account of the receipts and expenses,* intituled *An Account Rendered*. Much in-

* M. Necker had already been known as a writer. His first production, and, perhaps, his best, was a pamphlet in answer to an attack made upon the India Company by the Abbé Morèlet, in which he discovered precision of reasoning, and considerable talent for controversy. His later works have been spoiled by his vanity and egotism, his professions of virtue, &c. except that voluminous work on the *Legislation of Grain*, as he called it, which is a composition scarcely to be paralleled for ignorance of facts, falsity of reasoning, and inconsistency with itself. An Englishman in Paris, hearing this character of the book, went and bought it. "A book that contradicts itself," said he, "has a chance to be right somewhere at least." It is probable M. Necker wrote this book for popularity, and not because he felt he understood the subject; for it does not bear that appearance of his knowledge of trade and commerce, that is to be seen in his other productions. M. Necker's books are generally interspersed with good things, well expressed, and conveying real information: the work in question is, however, an exception.

direct praise of his own talents, and a most decided eulogium on his heart and intentions artfully interspersed through the work, served to raise him highly in the opinion of the public:

This *Account Rendered*, calculated in every respect to gain friends among the people at large, produced its effect; but how great was the admiration of all Europe, and the adoration of the French to a minister who boasted of giving liberty to America and of humbling Great Britain, without laying on a single tax? A minister, who, though a stranger, did this great service without receiving any pay from the state, and who for the first time, and as an example for others, shewed that his hands were clean, by rendering a voluntary account of his transactions. Words seemed unequal to his praise; and even in France the superlative degree was seldom ever more employed than on that occasion, unluckily, also, it has seldom ever been worse employed, as all parties will now readily confess.

M. Necker knew perfectly all the manœuvres of banking and stock-jobbing, having passed through every stage of the business from the clerk at thirty pounds a year to the partner of the first house in France; he knew extremely well how to make loans and raise money, and his secret in not laying burthens upon his people
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consisted in nothing more than in paying the interest of all former loans by that which he had made the latest; thereby giving the people a momentary ease, concealing the growing evil, acquiring a temporary fame and reputation for himself, but preparing a cruel reverse for the nation, and a difficult task for whoever might be unfortunate enough to succeed him in his office.*

When the American war was finished, it was impossible to go on with the perpetual resource of borrowing, and the impropriety of laying on taxes in time of peace is evident to all, particularly so when it was believed that M. Necker had carried on so expensive a war without rendering any new burdens necessary. The odium of this measure fell upon M. de Calonne, who had succeeded Necker, though not immediately; and upon the court for its extravagances, which were such, indeed, as could not be expected greatly to conciliate the public opinion. M. Necker retired to his own country, to contemplate from a distance the ravages of the flames which he had kindled, and under the appearance of defending his own

* It is wonderful that M. de Calonne, who succeeded Necker, and who had so long a contest with him about the finances, did not consider that, as the world could not follow out an intricate and long discussion, it would have been the wisest way to give this simple and true statement.

reputation, blowed the bellows with all the ardour possible, and with all the effect he could have defired.

The monied people and bankers made a common cause with M. Necker; they had participated in his fortunes, and they shared in his disgrace; his humiliation seemed to be their own, and the consequence was a general wish to humble the court and the nobility.

M. de Calonne, attached to his king and country, and desirous of serving them, was imprudent and unskilful in the way of doing it. Precisely the reverse of M. Necker in his way of thinking and acting, and having been long covered with debts, he wanted that order, reputation, and external appearance, which are necessary both to conduct things, and to inspire confidence. Besides, he mistook the manner of serving his country, he wanted to imitate Colbert, when he should have endeavoured to have imitated Sully.

Economy in the court, reforms of some abuses in the laws, and order in the finances, were what should have gone first. M. de Calonne, perhaps, despairing of bringing about that economy, wished, by encouraging trade and manufactures, to enable his country to bear those burthens, which want of economy rendered necessary. An attempt

attempt of this nature requires time to bring it to perfection, and tranquillity to allow its operations to succeed; and the confused and discontented state of things afforded neither of the two; so that, unsupported by public confidence, which he did not take the way to acquire, M. de Calonne was obliged to abandon his projects, with the mortification of having by the attempt rather inflamed the wound which he meant to heal.

The dilemma of a minister who wished really to serve his country, but who had not in himself the means of doing it, made him advise his Majesty to assemble the NOTABLES, which is an assembly, as its name plainly indicates, of notable or chosen persons throughout the kingdom.

The assembly of notables, by its ancient rights, had only the privilege of advising and investigating, but could do no act of a legislative nature.

The nature of public assemblies, and the modes of managing them and leading them to an useful end, were totally unknown in a despotic kingdom, where, for many ages, none had existed. Each individual brought his own opinion, and many spoke it with vigor and boldness. Although the advantages that might have been expected from this assembly, were not derived,
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yet, as it was the opinion of the majority of the members that an assembly of the *States General* could alone introduce order in the finances, and heal the wounds of the state, their opinion was generally adopted, and, from this general belief, the remedy they proposed became more necessary than ever.

The almost universal spirit of innovation; the reforms which the Emperor Joseph had attempted, and was then attempting, in the Austrian Low Countries, and in his hereditary dominions, added to the other causes we have already spoken of, and of which we have yet to speak, contributed greatly to make the members of this assembly wish to see an amelioration effected in the order of things in France. They have been accused, and perhaps with some reason, of wishing individually to become members of the states general, when they should meet *not to advise, but to act*. This was natural enough; and, if in other respects they had good intentions, it is difficult to see why they should be blamed for it. Let, however, the question of individual virtue, and wisdom, rest where it will, the result of all was this, that the discontents of the nation were greatly augmented by a remedy being pointed out for all their ills, which the court seemed unwilling to employ; and the whole bulk of the people looked forward to this assembly of the states as the term of their woes;

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so that every day that it was retarded added to the discontent and odium thrown upon the court and courtiers.

In this state were the finances, and thus was public opinion, when M. de Calonne quitted his place, and soon after the kingdom. As it is our business to trace the causes of the discontents, which laid the foundation for the sudden and total change of opinions in France, we shall not follow the Archbishop of Sens, who succeeded as prime minister,* in his ridiculous attempts to arrange matters of finance, because that would only be the history of the blunders of a man totally ignorant of what he was about; we shall only say, what thousands of living witnesses can attest, that an oppressed people found their miseries augmented in a two-fold manner, by the prospect of a remedy, and by that remedy being withheld by a court, of which the expenses and luxury were by no means concealed; a court, where the prodigality of Louis XIV. was equalled, but not imitated. Louis XIV. was great even in his follies; he was an encourager of merit and talents of every description, and by a kind of theatrical manœuvre, rendered his court the envy and admiration of all Europe. Louis XIV. was expensive and cruel upon the great scale

* In Calonne's time there was no prime minister; he, therefore, was at the head of the finances; in the Archbishop's time the comptroller general was only to be considered as an under secretary of state.

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where his ambition interfered; but if he was the scourge of the nation in which he was born, and of the age in which he lived, he was also their ornament, and his subjects bore with patience burthens which were conducive to the gratification of their great national passion, vanity. The palace of Versailles was the grandest in Europe, and its gardens the most magnificent; the flatterers whom his bounty or vanity fed, compared his days with those of the Emperor Augustus, and in doing so, pleased the nation as much as they pleased the king.* But the court of Versailles, in its latter days, had lost regard for public opinion, and with that had vanished those useful or brilliant qualities by which it is obtained.

Whilst those who profited by the ancient order of things, seemed totally indifferent as to public opinion, and that to so great a degree, that one would have thought they were ignorant of its importance, those men who wished for a change, seemed instinctively to know which way to go to work, and not a stone was left unturned, and no method untried of converting all the errors of the court to advantage.

* Those who chuse to trace national character through its windings, will see a great similarity between the vanity of imitating Augustus, and many pieces of republican affectation, such as new names borrowed from Rome and Greece, an imitation of Spartan simplicity, new calendars, &c. &c.

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The support given by the king of France to the Americans, when they threw off the yoke of this country, had also operated in changing the opinions of the French with respect to their own government. The Americans were then still known in France by the name of the *INSURGENTS*; the king of France had supported them in their insurrection against their sovereign, and had aided them in establishing a republic. The moderation of the Americans in their success, the wise laws which they had made; but, above all, the example of men who had fully succeeded, operated strongly in favour of insurrection and republican principles. The advocates of the late virtuous and unfortunate monarch could not deny, that he had himself supported an insurrection, and been the principal friend of the American republic; and although there was a difference between the two cases, it admitted of a discussion which could not but be unfavourable to the king. Whilst some said that the Americans had been ill treated by England, and merited support, others argued that there never were any *bastilles* in America, nor any *letters de cachet*, nor any *gabelle*; that though America had a right to complain, France had a still greater right, and that the king who had supported the cause of liberty on the other side of the Atlantic, ought not to preserve the power of oppressing his own subjects. These arguments seemed pretty convincing,

convincing, for nobody could say there ever had been abuses in America that were in any shape to be compared to those in France. The advocates of the French monarch were thus reduced to silence, for either Louis XVI. acted wrong in supporting the cause of freedom, or the cause of freedom ought to be supported against Louis XVI. While this and other reasonings took place amongst a certain set of men, the great majority of the people decided the matter by a very short mode; "insurrection was in all cases," said they, "insurrection, and liberty was liberty, and the king who kept from his own people what he had wasted by their blood and treasure to procure for strangers, was a tyrant, and so it was lawful and right to force him to give them what they wanted."

The queen, so fair, so amiable, and since then so unfortunate, and who, had she fallen into better hands,* was capable of setting the example of whatever was good or great, had espoused along with the French monarch, many of the follies and prejudices of that nation. Young, beautiful, and generous, she was soon led into all the expenses that splendour and donation are capable of occasioning. The desire of humbling

* It is not meant her husband, who was perhaps one of the most virtuous men of the age, but the people around the queen when she first arrived, and who never left her.

England had always been a ruling passion in France, and this the queen shared with those around her. It was no less a personage than the queen herself that first brought the American revolt into fashion at court, and of consequence many young men of family and ambition sought fame and distinction by going as volunteers to America;* and when they returned, flushed with victory, and full of republicanism, they affected to give the ton to the age, so that what the people cultivated from interest and inclination, those of higher rank did from fashion, and perhaps some few of them from principle.

The writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Raynal, had produced great effects upon the minds of that class of men, who, by their own writings and reasoning, when they are left at liberty, always finish by swaying those above them, as well as those below them; so that all ranks in society were prepared for changes; they formed hopes on a new order of things, and were much displeased with the present order, to which nothing attached them whatever.

Thus, by a concurrence of circumstances, which could scarcely have been more complete than it

* The Duc de Lauzun, since Biron, La Fayette, the two Lameths, General Rochambeau, Gouvion, &c. &c.

was, a field was prepared upon which Jacobin principles were to be sown : not that we mean to confound Republicanism and Jacobinism, but that the French confounded them ; not that liberty and anarchy can be mixt together, for where the one is, the other certainly never will be found, but that the French mistook anarchy for liberty, and were thereby led into those violent extremes for which they have always been so famous, and which are often so fatal and so difficult to retract.

Thus have we seen, that, previous to the revolution, every thing favoured a change, which therefore became unavoidable. We must next examine into the immediate causes of the violence of the change, that so soon after took place.

First of all it is to be observed, that though all parties wished for liberty, they were unacquainted with what true freedom is ; the first principles of it were misunderstood, and therefore, while they were seeking liberty with all the energy which so good a cause inspires, it was not difficult for designing and ill-intentioned men to lead them far beyond the mark at which they wished to aim.

Of those ambitious and designing men who were inclined to mislead the people, and who had the means of doing it, the Duke of Orleans must be considered as the chief ; possessed of revenues
equal

equal to royal, he was distinguished for most of those low vices (carried to a great excess) which are in general only to be found in the lower class of vagabonds. Every rank in society has the vices natural to itself, but this Duke, as if to shew mankind what an assemblage of vice might be produced in the same person, had the vices of all different ranks of society. First prince of the blood, he was a faithless and cowardly chief of a wicked faction; a bad husband to an excellent wife; a bad father; the murderer of a near relation, that he might inherit his fortune; given to every sort of knavery in regard to the tenants upon his estate; a gambler, without honour or integrity, and full of all the tricks practised by the lowest of the sort. He had but one crime to add, which he took care to do, that of murdering of his sovereign, to complete the catalogue.* An enemy to the king, whose personal character he disliked, as it was a reproach to his own, and to the queen, from motives of

* This portrait of the Duke is so black, that it may seem exaggerated. As to his debaucheries, his gaming, and his tricks of the little villain, they are known in England as well as in France. The incurable disease communicated to one of the best of wives; his cruelty and neglect of her; his having killed the Prince de Lambelle, his brother in law, by leading him on purpose, where he was to contract a mortal disorder; his letting all the shops and houses in the Palais Royal, and exacting a sum for the lease, and then selling them all (a sale in France breaks the lease) immediately, are well known. His private transactions were such; of his public ones we shall soon see plenty.

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pride, he longed for an occasion to humble both. Far from being destitute of talents, possessing energy and activity, which are frequently allied to a bad disposition, he seized with alacrity and avidity the first moment of trouble, to put himself at the head of a party.

M. de Calonne was no sooner at a distance than his successor endeavoured to raise taxes, and to bring the receipts to a level with the expenditures. It had been the custom, ever since the states general had been laid aside, to have the new taxes enregistered by the parliament of Paris, and the other parliaments of the kingdom; not that their enregistering was necessary to make it legal, but it had some appearance of doing so; and had become a custom so well established, that it would be dangerous to put a tax in force that was not so enregistered. Besides this, as the parliaments were the judges in civil and criminal cases, refractory people would not have been punished by them for refusing to pay a tax which they themselves had refused to enregister.

The parliaments refused to enregister the new taxes; the Duke of Orleans supported their opposition with all his influence, and that of his dependents, and by this he increased the embarrassment of the court, and procured for himself considerable popularity.

The squabbles between the king and the parliaments do not merit any exact relation, because they have no other connection with our subject than as they tended to inflame the minds of the people against the king, and attach them to those who espoused their interests.

It has never, perhaps, been the lot of any man to be *always* playing the part of a scoundrel in the eyes of mankind, and accordingly M. d'Orleans, for a few months, was banished from Paris on account of his having opposed the arbitrary will of the court !!!

The minister finding himself incapable of making things go on at all, and no money being to be had, the treasury was very unequal to the unavoidable expenses of the state, although the payment of the annuities at the town-house were retarded; so that the court finding it impossible to go on, it was resolved to recall M. Necker, in order to reconcile the people to the taxes, which it would be necessary to lay on; or by his credit with the monied men to procure, at least, what was absolutely indispensable. It is from the moment of M. Necker's recall, that we ought properly to begin our history; for it was then that the public voice obtained the first complete victory, and put the court entirely into the hands of its enemies; for from that day forward, the same faction that has since

overturned every thing, begun openly to cabal and to act; and though the heroes that we are now going to see strutting upon the stage, have been since then massacred, guillotined, put to flight, or have perished by their own hands, that does not prove that they were not exactly of the same band with those who have guillotined them or put them to flight; and in following them through their different windings, we shall see that they were all *intrinsically the same*; that private interest and particular circumstances only has made a difference; that the same man assumed the guise of a philosopher or an assassins, according to occasion; and that the principles laid down by the first innovators, in the first moments of their power, led to the last and greatest crimes, of which, any of what we call the sect of Jacobins have been guilty.

CHAP. III.

Necker's administration of finance—His politics—His alliance with the Duke of Orleans—Popularity of the Duke—He puts himself at the head of the reformers and factious, and protects them—Election to the states general—Intrigues of the Duke—The Abbé Seyeyes elected—His pamphlet—Democratic principles circulated every where—Indolence of the other party—Consequences natural from this opposite conduct.

FROM the time that Lewis the Sixteenth found himself compelled by public opinion, and his own necessities, to recall M. Necker, he was no longer the ruler of France; and what was still more, the whole tribe of courtiers lost their influence also, not with the king, but upon public affairs. M. Necker, too well acquainted with the urgent reasons of his recall, to be ignorant of his importance, or to fear his being dismissed, acted entirely as a master; not, indeed, in outward shew, for he affected a stiff and philosophical modesty and simplicity of manners, but in reality. His opinion was law, and the king was exactly reduced to the state of a bankrupt who had surrendered his effects to his creditors.

M. Necker found in the royal treasury, on his entering upon office as comptroller-general for the second time, only about sixteen thousand pounds sterling in cash, which was equal only to the current expenses of a few hours. As the most consummate ignorance of affairs was alone capable of having reduced the treasury to so empty a state, on his arrival it was soon replenished; not that M. Necker enjoyed the same confidence as when formerly in the same place in more prosperous times, but that he had sufficient credit and resource for any momentary supply. This was in the month of August, in the year 1788; the recall of the banished members of parliament, and an apparent peace amongst parties soon succeeded. As the necessity of preserving M. Necker at the head of affairs was generally known, and as it was also well known that no danger was to be apprehended of being punished by him for any freedom of speech, or of the press, Paris became a sort of debating club; every opinion was discussed there, and every assertion hazarded with boldness and rashness that plainly shewed that it was a new privilege to those who made so ill an use of it.

Although M. Necker was, properly speaking, minister of finance, he was, in fact, sole minister; or rather, if it had not been for the sake of form, he was the whole council, and the king was only there

there to lend his signature when it was wanted. If M. Necker had formerly suffered in his importance from not occupying a seat in council, he now was amply compensated, for he, in fact, occupied all the seats. The automata around were all moved by the man, to whom both king and people looked up for a deliverance from a state of very disagreeable embarrassment.

If there are persons, who yet recollecting the enthusiasm which the name of Necker once inspired, feel hurt at what has since happened to him, let them put their minds at ease, for M. Necker, by entering into a cabal with the Duke of Orleans, whose vices and villainies he well knew, has himself set the seal upon his boasted morality and virtue. The agents of the faction that opposed the court, promenaded the busts of the philosopher and the debauché together; they were equally the idols of the people, and of the same portion of the people;* they both spoke the same sort of language to the people, and appeared like two messengers of Heaven, sent down to cure the

* The other members of parliament who had been banished for opposing the king, were more esteemed than the Duke, and for some time more popular, but their popularity was of a different nature, it was with the public at large; with the sober citizen: that of Necker and d'Orleans was with that class of men since then not improperly named *sans culottes*, from their ragged and haggard appearance,

wounds of the state, and alleviate the miseries of individuals.

Amongst the strange propensities of the French, carried to excess, is that of being led away by sound and show. Those who knew the two chiefs in question, compared them to the quack doctor and the merry andrew of the fair; and the similitude was not a bad one, for they completely duped the lookers on, by appearing what they never were, nor ever wished to be, and by giving them remedies that were worse than the disease.

M. Necker, it is certain, had enough of virtue and good intention to have preferred serving the people to doing them an injury, provided the one and the other had equally served his own ambition; but where ever these two objects have come in competition, he has uniformly given the preference to what concerned most his own person.* Though the two first heroes of insurrection were

* As it is of importance that such men should be viewed in their true light, let us consider that M. Necker, who came a stranger into France, had amassed a princely fortune in a few years. Those who know banking business, know, that though it is a good one, it is not possible to rise so quickly by the fair line of business. M. Necker acquired his fortune by stock-jobbing, that is, gambling, and by the artificial rises and falls, which he and the other Genevese, his countrymen, understood better than

were capable of acting together at first, yet it is not from that to be inferred, that their turpitude was equal, for between them there certainly was a wide difference ; their conduct was the same while they thought their object the same, but they had different objects. M. Necker did not conceal his (though he concealed his measures as much as he could) which was a new order of things, more favourable to general liberty, over which he thought to preside. He had the vanity to imagine that public opinion would be always at his command, that he was to be the regenerator of France, and that the assembly of the states general would allow itself to be governed by him. Madame Necker, in the fulness of her glory, was heard to express herself to this purpose, adding, that she actually believed that if her husband were to conceive the idea of substituting another religion in the place of the Christian faith, his genius, his combinations, and his influence over the minds of men were such, that

than the French. This was much easier in France than it is in England, there being upon Change, at Paris, twenty different sorts of stock, both of government, of the India company, and of private companies, the capitals of which not being considerable, a few monied men, by buying and selling, could raise or lower them to a certainty, at pleasure ; it was no better than keeping a gaming table with false dice. Such was M. Necker's moral practice ; as to his moral professions, the world has been surfeited with them.

he believed he could bring mankind to adopt it. M. Neckar knew the art of stock-jobbing well, and the intrigues of the court a little, but he knew nothing at all of his influence with the people when once they should have no more use for his finance manœuvres, when once the court should be humbled, and his assistance should be no longer necessary. No man in a time of political difficulty had less resource than Necker, he was clumsy, useless, and inconvenient, and of consequence was the first public man whom the revolutionists discarded from their service with disgrace.

The Duke of Orleans, on the other hand, had no idea of establishing order, but disorder; "*Make the water muddy, said Philip, and I will fish in it.*" D'Orleans trusted to his money, his intrigues, his agents, and his new-fangled popularity, for profiting of whatever chances a state of disorder might throw in his way. This was precisely the view of that immense number of innovators who so soon after appeared; all of them calculated right as to the first outset of the affair, but every one of them was mistaken as to the ultimate consequences. It was a perspective, in which the immense revenues and riches of France were represented as wrested from the hands of the king and his feeble court, by men of energy and enterprize. The accumulated riches and honours of a thousand years, lay all before them, and the means

means of possessing them seemed easy by the intervention of the good people of Paris, whose opinion was entirely in their favour. Saturated with the view of so rich a prospect, and giddy with such a variety of objects, the eye did not perceive the gallows and the guillotine, the poignard and the torch, that were in the back ground. The people, obedient to their leaders when they commanded plunder, seemed to them a certain means of acquiring wealth and power, but they did not see that this same people would in the end turn against themselves, and tear from them the fruits of their first excesses. M. Necker, who thought he had influence enough to overturn the Christian religion, and establish another in its place, and d'Orleans, who calculated that he could always rule the mob, were equally mistaken in the end; but in the first part of their experiments their road was the same, destruction of the present order was the object; and, in planning this, the latter months of 1788, and the beginning of 1789, were employed.

Whilst the two chiefs were occupied in this manner, a number of speculators in anarchy, acting either as subalterns, or for their own proper account, were busied in preparing to assist openly, so soon as things should be a little farther advanced.

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The assembly *des amis des noirs*, under the appearance of ameliorating the state of their fellow creatures in the West India islands, held meetings which had a very different object. This assembly, called Friends of the Blacks, might with more propriety have been termed the enemies of the whites; it was a school for equality and absurdity. There people of different sexes, and of all ranks, might be admitted; but it was expressly forbidden to take off the hat or salute the company; so that Brissot and consorts, speculating on the revolutions they could bring on, and the plunder they could gain, were jumbled into one assembly with the virtuous Madame de la Rochefaucauld, without more ceremony than porters in the tap-room of an ale-house.

The humanity of relieving our fellow creatures led the virtuous and good to such an assembly, and the justness of the cause gave its members a cloak for circulating writings, which tended to prepare the way for the new systems that were broaching. The circumstance alone of not being allowed to take off the hat, nor to return a salute, was a clear proof, that the assembly was for another purpose than that which it professed; and if that can be doubted, we may easily be convinced, when we find that Condorcet, Claviere, Brissot, and a number of those persons, who since have propagated with such effect the
system

system of riot, robbery, and murder, were its leading and active members.

The state of senseless inactivity, and of stupid torpidity, into which men of rank and fortune had fallen, who no longer now made any noise, or appeared to be of any importance, left the field open to adventurers, who had occasion to speculate upon the public mind; and as credulity, and the disposition to adopt whatever is new, have always been known to predominate in Paris, it was therefore necessary to attract public attention by what was extraordinary; in the center from which most of the fashions, the customs, and rules of behaviour in modern Europe have come, it would have been difficult to establish any thing more new than a total disregard to every custom, and to every form, necessary not only for politeness but even for decency in society. The cloak of humanity and philosophy reconciled people to it in some degree, and they began to reason on the natural equality and artificial inequality of man; so that to the discontents occasioned by real evils, and the hopes of bettering their situation, people began to unite that sort of modern philosophy which has since led to such fatal extremes.

The great art of beginning commotions consists in seducing the minds of men by the appearance of

of what is good and virtuous, and of what will make them happy; but above all, of what suits the interest, or flatters the passion of the greater number. It was in correspondence with this plan, that the words of *liberty, equality, rights of man, humanity, virtue, friends and brothers, universal benevolence, &c.* were perpetually in the mouths of the first innovators. The people believed they saw a number of beneficent deities descended from heaven to give them happiness, and sell them bread and wine at half price;* and of consequence they were prepared, whenever the occasion should offer, to aid and assist with all their might in a *reform*, (for the revolution was announced under that specious name) that promised so great an advantage, and which they considered as being founded upon right and justice.

* The French began to have caricature prints at this time, and a very famous one was that of a poor cobbler, who was saying to his wife, just returned from market, where every thing was very dear, "Patience Margott, we shall soon have *three times eight*;" which signified bread at eight sols the loaf, beef at eight sols the pound, and wine at eight sols. Such were the views of the people; they were good and laudable, but were soon perverted. This caricature was soon succeeded by the *Calculating Patriot*, who reckoned up the number of heads already cut off, and the number wanted to insure the happiness of the people. Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress* is not more curious, than the *Progress of the Wants of the People*, which began with bread and wine, and ended with blood and murder.

The winter of 1778 and 1779 was one of the most severe, both on account of its great length and the intensity of the cold, that had been seen for many years; so that, in addition to the stagnation which uncertainty always gives to trade, the season was such as to occasion a great deal of misery. Wood for firing was no dearer than usual, it is true, but it was more necessary, and the price was at all times exorbitant. Bread, which is the great nourishment of the people of France, was dear, and not so good as usual; the loaf of bread that used to be at eight sols having risen to eleven and twelve. Butcher's meat, too, was dearer than usual, and the productions of the garden could not be had in so rigorous a season. The miseries of the poor all through France were by this rendered extreme; and here it is no more than justice to say, that the rich and opulent, and in particular the clergy, performed wonders in relieving their sufferings. It would have seemed, that Providence gave to the rich one last opportunity of shewing what the Christian charity of the church, and the generosity of an ancient nobility, were capable of doing. The poor and needy, whom shame prevented from seeking aid, were themselves sought after, and relief was forced upon the poor starving family in their cold and hungry retreat, by those same clergymen and nobility who soon after were driven from their own abodes. Surely those acts which did such honour
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to those who performed them, and are a full proof that their follies and luxury, and the oppression they occasioned to the people, were not from badness of heart and from want of feeling. These acts of charity were not the acts of a few, they were general, and were done without ostentation or shew, as such actions always ought to be.

The Duke of Orleans did not let slip this occasion to signalise himself; his charities were numerous and splendid, and industriously held up to public view; while M. Necker, who wanted to reform every thing, sent to St. Germain for an ox, had it weighed, killed, and weighed again, skin, horns, hoofs, &c. being deducted. The butchers were convicted of selling at twelve sols what, by calculation, cost only eight. But though this experiment served to shew that things were too dear, no serious attempt was made to reduce the price, and the only advantage resulted to the minister, who obtained credit for his good intentions.

Public works of charity were instituted, where people were employed to grind corn at the public expense; this afforded the lower orders means of caballing, by bringing great numbers together for the same object, and having the same interests. M. Necker has been accused of having done so with design; but there seems little reason for the
accu-

accusation, which appears rather to be a fabrication of his enemies than a fact. It was really necessary to do something to employ the idle, who were starving. Hand-mills, though a dear way of grinding, were still a resource in so long and severe a frost. Besides, M. Necker was never seriously accused of wanting humanity; and to all this must be added, that though he wanted to have public opinion to support his measures, there was no probability that mobs or cabals amongst the lower orders could serve his purpose; it is therefore but fair to acquit him of this charge.

With regard to M. Necker, as well as most of those who worked in the revolution, (to use their own expression, *travailler la revolution*) people are apt to attribute to design and to distant project what only arose from necessity or particular circumstances; and the proof of this is, that every one of the leaders of the revolution has fallen a sacrifice to the results of his own principles, which results were, therefore, not foreseen: another proof of the same thing arises from this, that the greater number seem to have had *no fixed plan, only to destroy order, and employ occasion to advantage*. Thus the pick-pocket creates a confusion in a crowd, and trusts to his own dexterity for the profits which he may reap from it. M. Necker was interested in humbling the court, and rising

as a sort of dictator between the king and the people; but he was interested, and that deeply too, in preserving the force of a government, the reins of which were in his own hands.

It was during the rigour of the winter that M. Necker arranged his plan for the mode of assembling the states general; fearing, that if they were called in the ancient form, the nobility and clergy would prevent innovation; he gave it as his opinion, that the third state, as it was called, or the commons, should have a double representation; that is, be represented by as many deputies as the other two.

Whilst mankind has been improving in arts, sciences, and, amongst others, the art of leading each other into errors by a false philosophy and metaphysical argument, we do not find that they have improved much in common sense; there are even some reasons for thinking, that it is become more rare than it was formerly. As common sense arises from the action of the mind upon itself, and upon the objects which naturally come before it, that methodical way in which people are brought up to speak about every thing, and to judge of every thing, hinders the mind from keeping itself company, as it were, and under the influence only of facts and observations forming a judgment. The old times, when the states

general were first instituted, are therefore not by any means to be despised; and there seems to have been very great reason, since the state was composed of three different orders, to give each an equal share of power that it might preserve itself.

M. Necker was unwilling to take the responsibility and the consequence of this business upon himself; he therefore advised calling a new assembly of the notables, in order to regulate the method of calling the states general, hoping that it would be easy to make that assembly chuse the mode which he himself approved. In this, however, he was disappointed, the notables did not think proper to determine it in his favour; so that, after having called them together on purpose to follow their advice, he dismissed them on purpose to follow his own.

The double representation of the third state having been resolved upon, letters for their election were expedited. M. Necker had published his reasons for changing the form, a precaution sufficiently useless, as the far greater number wished it; those who did not wish it had no means of opposing him; and his reasons were too flimsy to convince any one. It was evident, that by giving double the number of voices to one party united in interest, the other two, who were not in one interest, must sink under the contest.

That was precisely what every thinking man expected, and what M. Necker wished. He was the minister of the people, and he thought to govern their deputies as he had governed their king; but he was not long before he discovered his mistake.

In the election of deputies every thing was against the court and the nobility. M. Necker, the minister who acted for the court, favoured the election of Protestants, of poor clergymen, and of lawyers; in order the better to have them at his command, and in order to be the more certain of humbling the rich proprietor and dignified clergyman. In this last hope he was not deceived, but in the former he was, as we shall soon see.

The Duke of Orleans, with his extensive lands, great revenues, and numerous dependents, made great efforts every where. Accustomed to intrigues, and surrounded with men who were so too, he succeeded wonderfully in a country where election manœuvres, so disgraceful to those that employ them, were little known. As the manœuvres at a horse-race and at an election are very much of one stamp, the duke, who was always surrounded by jockies, gamblers, and men of such description, succeeded pretty well. He was also grand master of the order of masonry, and had,
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by that means, a good opportunity, at a very small expense, of giving a bias to the elections in different parts.

The lovers of change, having all the same cant phrases at command throughout the kingdom, easily knew each other, and, as if by a sort of sympathy, without any previous arrangement, they lent aid to each other; so that in the election matters, the great majority was on the side of reform and change.

Great, however, as all the efforts and exertions of M. Necker and the duke were, they never could have had any considerable degree of success, had the proprietors of lands and the dignified clergy set seriously about getting themselves chosen; but they neglected this opportunity of serving their country entirely, whether through ignorance of the necessity of exertion, through indolence, or trusting to some other method of preserving their weight in the state, or to a combination of all the three, the fact was exactly as it is related; persons were represented, but property was not; and as property cannot protect itself, the ruin which it has experienced is not any great reason for astonishment.

Amongst the deputies who were by the duke's interest elected to the states general, was a man

who, to the cause of anarchy, was worth an host; a man of a taciturn, cold disposition, a clergyman with much erudition, but no religion; cruel and a metaphysician, determined to stick at nothing to advance his fortunes, and capable of laying deep plans and guiding their execution. Such a man was the Abbé Seyeyes, elected deputy for Paris, to fill up the last place that was vacant.*

When deputies were chosen, it was the ancient custom, and was still adhered to, for the electors to draw up their intentions and their wishes in the form of instructions, which were called CAHIERS; these were intended as a rule for the conduct of the representatives, and by a comparison of the different cahiers, by extracting and comparing their contents, the real wishes of the nation might have been known.

* The election manœuvre in Paris was a very complete one. Paris alone sent forty members, and the duke proposed several, amongst others this abbé, who was totally unknown, he had never been heard of. The elections were protracted by different delays, till the members from every quarter of the kingdom were already arrived; till the electors were all tired out and fatigued; and, in short, till they had neither any time to lose nor to spare; so that he might be actually said to be forced upon them, as by delay and fatigue large assemblies are often led to do what the majority of members never intended.

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The Duke of Orleans, by his situation, had a right to give a cahier to some of the deputies chosen on his estates, and it was there that he made his great stroke at popularity. The Abbé Seyeyes was said to have composed it, and it is more than probable that he did so; but whoever was its author, the duke gave the example of the first prince of the blood standing up the advocate of the rights of the people against his own interest. Those who knew his real character vented exclamations of wonder at his villainous duplicity; and those who knew him not, were as much astonished at his virtue and philanthropy. The lower class were in ecstasy, and he obtained by his popularity amongst the fish-women and sellers of fruit, the title of King of the Markets, (*Roi des Halles*) which, to those who know Paris, will appear equivalent to king of the rabble.

Previous to the opening of the states general, when public expectation and anxiety was wound to its highest pitch, a pamphlet made its appearance, written by the Abbé Seyeyes, composed with much art, plausibility, and false reasoning, and entitled, *What is the third state?* This title plainly implied the question of the importance of the people at large. "The third state," says he, in this pamphlet, "is at present as nothing—it

“ought to be every thing, and it only wants to
“be something.”

Such a pamphlet, printed and spread abroad with the money of the duke, at so important a period; and when men were yet unused to inquiries of the sort, could not but excite great notice; it was accordingly considered as a masterpiece of argument and philosophy, and Monsieur l'Abbé was considered as the most profound metaphysician of the age, the ablest statesman, and the most liberal-minded writer who had ever enlightened the human race.

In the pamphlet of the abbé may be found the foundation of the whole Jacobin creed, disguised, indeed, so as not to offend by too abrupt an introduction of principles which are of a nature to revolt any reasonable man; but leading on imperceptibly to conclusions, of which the reader was not at first aware, and at which he is the more certain to arrive, that he does not suspect where he is going.

It is one of the evils attending metaphysical reasonings, that their results are frequently not discovered till men are led into errors from which it is difficult to draw back. The work in question appeared to the bulk of its readers at
first

first only to prove, that the majority were oppressed, and that they ought not to be so, but to seek redress by assuming that importance to which their superior number gave them a just title. The pamphlet appeared to contain little more at first; it seemed to be a simple state of facts, told in a style that announced a calm, unprejudiced, and instructed mind, good intentions, and a sound judgment. When, afterwards, the third state had not only become something, as he modestly had announced, but had in fact engrossed every power, this same pamphlet hinted at the use they should make of that power, in a way that was become intelligible, since the position of things had changed, though it was not so at its first appearance. To give an example of this:—Men had already learned, that the minority was to be governed by the majority in the decision of political questions; from this a deduction was artfully drawn, that the will of the majority was the law of the whole; and that the interest of the majority ought to be their guide. Thus though the first principle laid down is fair; the two others, that seem to the person who does not reflect to rise out of it, are the most false and dangerous that can be imagined, and from which it would result, that the will of the majority becomes law and justice. But it goes still farther; for the majority is to judge what is for its good, and therefore the life of the individual is at the disposal of the great
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number. This doctrine was contained in the book, but couched in such terms as only to become evident as the minds of men got ready for it, something like a sympathetic ink.

We must dwell the more upon this pamphlet, that it was a production that operated such amazing effects, and because it contained the basis of all those principles which have since been carried to such pernicious excesses. Perhaps no production on either side of the question has been written in so artful a manner. The steps by which people were led on to false conclusions, as matters ripened, was of more importance than may at first sight be imagined; for had the SAME principles been contained in different productions of the SAME man, they would not still have produced the SAME effects; moderate and well meaning men became at first converts to the principles of the Abbé Seyeyes, they had approved of his work openly, and both inclination and pride hindered them from retracting. It is true, they found the book contained more than they had at first understood to be meant; but it was not so easy for a new-fangled patriot to confess that he had read and not understood, and approved without comprehending; so that many persons who never thought of any such thing, but who did not know how to extricate themselves from the metaphysical labyrinth,

labyrinth, became unreasonable and unjust from having too hastily committed themselves.

As all the writers, and most part of the talkers, were on the same side of the question, the political opinions of the Abbé Seyeyes were almost universally adopted and approved. There were, indeed, a certain set of men who, from superior knowledge or from a natural soundness of judgment, saw through all these sort of reasonings, but they had no means of counteracting their evil effects. More than half a million of copies of the pamphlet had been circulated, and any answer that could have been given to it, would never have exceeded a circulation of one or two thousand, perhaps not so many hundreds, and those would have chiefly fallen into the hands of reasonable thinking men, who did not want them; the ignorant and acting many would never have heard of them.

It is certainly here a proper place, while we are recording the energy, activity, and art of the Jacobins, to record also the opposite and contrary qualities of their rivals. At the time when the Duke of Orleans first began to set with activity to work, though with an immense fortune, and M. Necker with the royal treasury in his hands, yet the money that was at the disposition of the proprietors and dignified clergy, was more than
fifty

fifty times as much, and it was their property and consideration in the kingdom that was attacked; they might, therefore, have made a powerful stand. Their revenues amounted to at least fifty millions sterling, and any sum that their enemies could dispose of, certainly did not amount to half a million. Yet, in this state of things, did the proprietors pay a single man of merit to plead their cause? No. If by chance a man of merit refuted their enemies, did they make a small sacrifice to give publicity to his work? No. He who pleaded the cause of murder and plunder saw his work distributed by thousands and hundreds of thousands, and himself enriched; while he who endeavoured to support the cause of law, of order, and of the proprietor, had his bookseller to pay, and saw his labours converted into waste paper. It is true, he had the consolation of his own mind, and the esteem of the few to whom his good intentions were known; but, with regard to effect upon the public mind, he produced none; his main object was, therefore, unattained, and the revolutionary arguments remained triumphant.

With energy, some money, and a disposition to make use of it, on one side; and on the other, indolence, pecuniary means in abundance, but not the will to employ one shilling of it; can we be surprised that things went in favour of those who had

had the energy and will? It would have been surprising if it had not: and, accordingly, we have since seen the shirtless, shoeless vagabond burning the castles and title deeds of the proprietor, and, with a high hand, put himself in his place.*

It would be useless and absurd at this moment to give the History of Jacobinism, with the avowed intention of stopping its progress, without advert- ing in a pointed manner to the blameable conduct of those who were both by interest and principle bound to make a stand.

It is in vain to imagine that, in the present state of society, any order of things will long exist, that is not supported by general opinion. Men have of late learned the art of revolting, while

* In this country, we have had something like an example of this in Paine's Rights of Man. It has been supposed by those, who have good opportunities of knowing, that above two hundred thousand copies of his book have been dispersed. So much for that clumsy advocate of anarchy. An advocate of order, and defender of proprietors, would not have sold, perhaps, five hundred copies, and would have had money to pay to his book- seller. While this remains so, can men of property wonder if the minds of the lower class are led astray? they cannot buy books, and bad ones are given to them; so they hear only the wrong side of the question. Nor is it sufficient to suppress a book by authority; on the contrary, it appears to many to be a proof, or, at least, a presumption, that what was thus forcibly suppressed, was unanswerable; although with respect to Paine that was far from being the case.

that.

that of governing is becoming daily more difficult; and this discovery is too important, and too fatal to the human race, not to merit opposition. Public opinion, and not force, is the only firm, solid, and durable foundation for power; even Robespierre himself, with his armies composed of millions of soldiers, and thousands of executioners; with all his poignards, his cannons, and his guillotines, was obliged to devote most of his time and his efforts to preserve public opinion; and he sunk like a wretch the moment that he ceased to govern that opinion. The different sects of Jacobins, have they not all fallen, as their turn came to lose the support of the public voice? But, if the example of the efficacy of opinion amongst the Jacobins of France is not thought applicable to a well regulated state,* let us call to mind the revolutions from kingly power to republicanism at Rome, and from a republic to an empire: let us remember our own revolutions, whether they were in support of men or of measures, opinion and the general will were the forerunners of all those changes. We have just finished taking a review of the change of opinion that preceded the revolution in France; and can we for one moment doubt of the necessity of preserving argument on our side, if we will preserve peace and

* Opinion, in fact, is of less importance as governments are more arbitrary; that of England not being arbitrary at all, it is here absolutely necessary.

order? Fortunately, the arguments on the side of law and order are much stronger than any that can be employed by its enemies, if we chuse to employ them; but it is not individual effort that that will avail the cause. Defence requires as much exertion as attack; and the Jacobins themselves have set us the example how it is to be done, and that we ought rather to have recourse to acting upon mind than upon matter.

The history of all nations has shewn that persecution and oppression have given vigour to the opinions of the oppressed. Did not the Christian religion extend over a great portion of the world under oppression? Did not the Protestant church flourish under a cruel persecution? And what is still more, did it not cease to extend the moment its enemies ceased to persecute? The Jewish religion, too, professed by erring vagabonds, whom mankind have joined in all countries to oppress, whose interest seems to be their ruling passion, and whose interest would have generally been greatly advanced by changing their faith; has all this converted them? No. The poor despised Jew continues to keep his sabbath as he did three thousand years ago. Such is the effects of force and power upon the mind, and no great depth of thought is necessary to form a conclusion.

Such

Such as we have described, then, were the first efforts of those men who, few in number, had conceived the plan of overturning every thing that they might get something, and of destroying a great deal that they might get a little; until the opening of the states general gave them a wider field to act in, from which moment we shall find them assume a confidence that makes their actions and their maxims more easily followed, and their motives traced with a greater degree of precision and certainty.

CHAP. IV.

Assembly of the states general—Conciliatory disposition in the king—Opposite disposition of the deputies of the third estate—The grand question of the manner of voting—Public opinion in favour of one general assembly of the three orders—The king's offer on the 23d of June—Obstinacy of the deputies of the third estate—Divisions in the assemblies of the other two orders—Members of the clergy and nobles join the third estate—The court becomes serious—Ministry changed—Troops march against Paris—Energy and activity of the people—The revolt begins openly on the 12th of July.

THOUGH we have already seen some of the heroes who entered as representatives of the people into the states general, yet the names of most of those who are just about to become conspicuous, had, according to the common expression, never before been heard of; and the few who were already known, displayed in general a sort of character, which they had never before been suspected to possess, so that we may consider it almost as an assembly altogether of new men.

The number of deputies for the whole kingdom amounted to twelve hundred, which, according to the new method of election, giving the tiers état, or third estate, a double representation, allowed three hundred for the nobility, three hundred for the clergy, and six hundred for the third estate.

The place of assembly was fixed at Versailles, in a hall called the Menus Plaisirs (where the dresses belonging to the opera and the theatre of the palace used to be kept;) in this hall the assembly was to be opened by the king and his ministers, which, when done, the deputies of the different orders were to separate, and to discuss their interests; after which, in following the old form, they were to meet again to adjust matters, and reconcile whatever might be different in their views and interests.

When the assembly was opened, M. Necker explained, in a long memorial, the state of the finances of the kingdom, and the embarrassments, giving at the same time plainly to understand, that the king himself *possessed the power*, and had the means of arranging every thing, but that the beneficence of his majesty had made him listen to *his* advice, and call together the representatives of the people.

After

After this day of opening, which was rather a day of ceremony than of business, the deputies of the nobles, and of the clergy, retired to two adjoining halls, of a smaller size, which were appointed for them; the deputies of the third estate, being the most numerous, remaining in the hall of the general assembly. The different dispositions of the king, of his minister, and of the deputies of the three orders, were evident from different circumstances, otherwise in themselves but of little importance.

When the king entered the assembly, the usage was not to take off his hat;* the nobles and the clergy were to follow his example, but the deputies of the third estate were to uncover themselves. The king, though he entered at one end of the hall, having the clergy on the right hand, the nobles on the left, and the deputies of the third estate at the opposite end, perceived that though they uncovered themselves, it was done with reluctance, and not with that alacrity which might be expected. His majesty, on beginning to address the assembly, took off his hat as if by a natural movement, and found means, without appearing to do it designedly, to remain uncovered

* The king and nobles wore Spanish hats, with white feathers, and the whole dress was nearly that of the nobles of Spain.

during the whole time that he remained. The nobles and clergy were thus obliged to uncover themselves too, and tranquillity was restored, by establishing that dearly beloved equality, which was already uppermost in the minds of almost every one.

The conciliatory disposition of his majesty was very visible, even by this trifling circumstance, which was likewise a proof of his penetration, for though none of the spectators were so far off from the members of the third estate as he was, yet very few of them observed the difficulty, and perhaps not one of them would have thought of so quick and complete a remedy.

M. Necker's views of personally dictating, in matter of finance to the assembly, were very evident, by the discourse which he had read; and his declaration of the king's having it in his power to make the arrangements necessary, without the states general, was a proof that he was a favourer of absolute monarchy, unless it was only meant as a hint to give them to understand that they were there only during pleasure.

The nobility and clergy on that day exercised, as was usual, their privileges, without any effort either to conciliate or irritate the third estate, which, by their murmurs on the first moment, shewed

exactly the same disposition that has ever since been manifested by all the innovators. An ancient custom, which could not then have been changed, as they had not yet begun their reform, might have reconciled philosophers, as they pretended to be, to an empty ceremony, of which it would be as ridiculous in us to defend the utility, as it was in them to find in it a cause of offence. The impatience of the third estate, their unanimity, and the disposition of not passing over the least circumstance that tended to distinguish them in honour from the other two orders, are very evident. It was impossible to begin sooner, or upon a more frivolous occasion, nor, it may be added, more improperly; it was not to reform useless ceremonies, established a thousand years ago, that their constituents had sent them there, but to ask and obtain a redress of real grievances, to reconcile opposite and jarring interests, and not to throw obstacles in the way of general arrangement, by exciting such trifling dissensions.

Whether with design or not, it had been so ordered by the minister, that the third estate, consisting only of between five and six hundred members, held their sittings in a hall capable of containing, with ease, two thousand persons, so that there was room for the curious of all descriptions to witness their debates. The hall of the nobility was not capable of containing five hundred per-

sons, so that as the deputies themselves amounted to near three hundred, the number of spectators could but be few. The place of assembly of the clergy was nearly about the same size with that for the nobles.

From this circumstance it naturally resulted, that the debates and reasonings of the third estate so popular, from the cause they tended to support, were widely spread abroad, and repeated with eagerness and enthusiasm by that crowd of spectators of all ranks, who went every day from Paris to be witnesses of what passed.

The reasonings of the nobility and clergy, less popular from their nature, but not less eloquent, were little known, and inspired no interest; the third estate seemed already to be the only assembly, and their opinions became those of the public, almost in an instant.

The change already made in the numbers of the representatives, for the three orders, not only opened a door for other changes, but rendered some others absolutely necessary.

The orders used formerly to discuss the questions separately, and the simple majority in the assembly of each order determined the question. The determinations of the orders being thus fixed

fixed separately, they had to meet and reconcile their interests in a general assembly; or when they could not settle a point amicably, the opinion of two of the orders carried it against the third. As his majesty, by the advice of his minister, had doubled the number of representatives of the third estate, it was naturally a question to be discussed, whether the manner of taking the votes should not be changed. This was therefore the first question that came before the deputies.

It was evident that to increase the number of voices and to continue the old manner of voting, would have been perfectly useless, for if the result of the deliberations of 600 persons was reduced to unity, and that three hundred in each of the other assemblies constituted one vote also, there was no use for having named six hundred deputies for the third estate. The people were witnesses to all this reasoning, and the question whether they should vote by head or by order, as it was called; that is to say, whether the total majority of voices should determine a question, or the majority of orders, was soon decided with the public in favour of a majority of voices.

The nobles and the clergy, on the other side, insisted, that as they had separate interests, they ought to vote separately; that two bodies of three hundred each, with different views, could not

with any effect vote against six hundred, all united in opinion and interest, and who discussed their affairs in one assembly, whilst they were separated from each other. This reasoning was perfectly good, but it was not of any weight with the public, who scarcely knew what was passing in these two assemblies. Supposing, indeed, the reasonings on all sides had been known, it would not have resolved the difficulty, because the new change of a double representation had rendered the whole an absurd combination. The debates on this subject were warm, and occupied all France; which ever way they turned, there seemed to be either difficulty or absurdity in the arrangement, except by joining all the members together in one assembly, and debating their interests in common; though even this did not obviate the difficulties arising from the nobles and clergy not possessing the same common interest, while the other six hundred deputies did. The deputies of the third estate, so far from denying this, allowed it to be true, and it was from this very circumstance that they made themselves certain of victory; but they argued that the nobles and clergy were Frenchmen, that a noble was a man like another, and that if he had any separate interest, far from that being a reason for voting separately, that difference of interest only arose from abusive privileges, and was a reason for their being all united in one assembly.

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We have already seen, by tracing the fall of the feudal system, and of the influence of the Church of Rome, how much men were inclined to listen to such an opinion; there was accordingly a great majority of people, and of the deputies themselves, in favour of *one common assembly*; this was precisely what those who wished for a revolution wanted, and it is clear that the minister who changed the original form of election, must have had it in view, if he was not totally ignorant of what he was about, and only meant to gain popularity, by adding an useless number to the deputies of the third estate.

This was a moment when the court might have made one last effort to regain popularity and power, it was a time when the necessity of such an attempt was necessary and very evident. The deputies of the third estate had completely shewn what were their intentions, but they had not yet absolutely tried their force; so that if the king had made the sacrifices of power which were reasonable, and which the general spirit of the cahiers dictated; if he had resolved upon economy, and thereby satisfied the reasonable portion of his subjects, the revolutionary gentlemen would soon have been reduced to insignificance; but the court did nothing, and the last moment of its power and influence fast approached; for when once a trial of strength was made, and victory followed

followed to the third estate, the foundation of the revolution was completely and solidly laid. No concessions which the king could afterwards make, could be accepted, because, arising from necessity, they were liable to be suspected, and the stronger party could not be supposed to accept conditions that neither gratified the ambition of individuals, nor secured the general interest.

The court ought to have known the number of members in each of the chambers on whom it might depend; as for the intentions of its enemies, they were well known: it was, therefore, the excess either of carelessness or folly to put itself in the power of a general assembly, decidedly inimical to its interests, without making any effort to avoid so dangerous an extremity.

The short interval between the first assembling of the states general and the meeting of all the members in one hall, is one of the most important in the revolution, because it determined completely the contest between the king and the people, as to power; with regard to their manner of using that power afterwards, that was not at all the question; and, certainly, if the greatest enemies of the people had set to work to point out the evils to be apprehended, they would not have been able to do it, for the plain reason, that no strength of imagination

gination would have been sufficient to have conceived then what has happened since.

To add, if possible, to the impatience of the public during this period, the only regular method of knowing what passed in the three different chambers, was by the Journal of Paris, a daily newspaper, upon a small half sheet, that had room only to enter into the heads of what had occurred. This paper was under the direct influence of the court, therefore was suspicious and suspected; besides, it never gave the debates till four or five days after. It is not in England that there will be any difficulty to conceive the uneasiness, anxiety, and displeasure, occasioned by such a method of reporting those important debates; this was foreseen by M. le Comte de Mirabeau, of whom we shall presently speak more at large, who had announced a daily paper, containing always the debates of the day preceding, and the subscription for which had not been open a week at his bookfeller's, *before the amount subscribed for three months only was more than thirty thousand livres, or above twelve hundred pounds. The court put a stop to this immediately; and, by this exertion of power, inflamed the public mind still more, and did not do any good; for Mirabeau was one of those daring men with a fertile brain,

* Mons. le Jay, bookfeller, rue de Léchelle.

who soon found out a means of publishing a periodical work under so reasonable a form, that it would have been the highest oppression to have suppressed it, under the name of *Letters to his Constituents*,; thereby appearing to render an account of the manner in which he did his duty as a representative, he not only gave an account of what had passed in the assemblies, but he could with propriety add what he thought proper of his own, which, in the simple form of a journal, he could not have done so properly. Besides, he was not tied down to relate every thing as in a plain narration, and, therefore, he passed over in silence whatever did not suit his purpose, and heightened the colours of whatever did.

The Count de Mirabeau was one of those extraordinary men, who never feel themselves in their element upon ordinary occasions, but who, in attempts that are difficult and require genius, carry all before them. Mirabeau, whose whole life had been a history of crimes, of blunders, and of misfortunes, whose name was considered as a reproach, and whose company was shunned by every man who had money or reputation to preserve, made himself conspicuous the moment that the usual order of society began to be inverted. Convinced that he could not obtain a seat in the states general amongst the order of nobles, and which, if he could have procured, would

would not have suited his designs; he went to Marseilles, where the people are of a lively and violent turn; there he became a retail grocer, with the assistance of money lent him by his bookseller; and, from behind the counter, dressed with an apron, he distributed his groceries, his bon mots, and his principles, amongst all the people of the town, the first for money, the rest for nothing. As there never scarcely was a man who had a greater faculty of rendering himself agreeable, as it flattered the simple citizens to see a nobleman of an ancient family reduce himself to their level, Mirabeau had not found the smallest difficulty to procure a majority of votes in his favour.* Perhaps, the violence since displayed by the Marseillois, and, in general, by the inhabitants

* Concerning so extraordinary a genius as Mirabeau, there have been a thousand things asserted, as is usually the case, and most of them exaggerated, both as to his crimes and his abilities. The son of a man of fortune and a man of letters, he had a good education; but, very early in life, shewed dispositions which obliged his father to solicit as a favour a *lettre de cachet* to put him in prison. From one crime to another, and from debt to debt, he had-passed the greater part of his time in different prisons, where he had not, however, neglected to improve his mind. In England, where he came for a little while, he got himself into a scrape with justice, by which he got into Newgate, and narrowly escaped being sent to Botany Bay, or to the hulks at Woolwich. A man, therefore, who had been continually at war with order and the property of others, and who had suffered so much from it, could be no great friend to either; obliged, likewise, to obtain a precarious subsistence by his pen
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tants of the south of France, was as much owing to Mirabeau, as to their natural vivacity of disposition: but, be that as it may, it is certain that the Letters to his Constituents, which he published, produced a very inflammatory effect all through France, and prepared people more and more for those excesses and those persecutions of the nobles, which so soon after took place. By these letters the factious of all sorts were led to a point of re-union, and that point was their author. So that their violent spirits acting upon each other, and then upon the public, a sort of revolutionary volcano was created; and, if we may be permitted to extend the comparison, it was from this volcano that the lava run, and the ashes flew, which have more or less incommoded every nation in Europe.*

and his address, he wanted none of those talents which were necessary in a revolution. He is said to have been very deficient in personal courage; but to this he replied, that, as he could not fight with one-tenth of his enemies, it was needless to begin; when he received a challenge, he therefore coolly drew out a memorandum book, and put his antagonist on the list, to be fought when he should have time. This was attributed to cowardice, but certainly unfairly; for, had he been willing to fight, and had twenty lives, they would soon have been all gone; therefore, it was necessary at once either to renounce his revolutionary career, or do as he did.

* Mirabeau was assisted by three Genevese gentlemen; one of them pensioned by the King of England; another, who lives with a nobleman in England, and whose names it would be cruel to mention; and Claviere, who jointly aided in writing his Letters to his Constituents.

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The bad moral character of Mirabeau was so much against him, that the first time he attempted to speak, the assembly would not listen to him; but he was not a man to be diverted from his purpose by any such trifling circumstance; for, as he knew better than any one that was there the storm that was preparing, as his great penetration informed him of his being more capable of riding on that storm than any of those around him, he knew he would soon not only be heard, but listened to; and he was not deceived.

The court, either disregarding or despising its enemies, but at the same time wishing to put itself out of their power, assembled great numbers of the military in and about Paris and Versailles; but, by the same fatality which seems to have been attached to all its measures, no precautions were taken to put the minds of the people at ease, nor to preserve the troops from sucking in the same principles of rebellion and revolt, which were but too apparent in the citizens of almost every description.

The volatile disposition of the Parisian is famous all over the world, but with this there is also an expedition, quickness, and enthusiasm, in what interests him, that on occasion is capable of producing great effects. Uneasy, and apprehensive on account of the assemblage of such a
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number of the military, and urged on by the real or pretended apprehensions of the deputies, who represented themselves as being in the most imminent danger, the citizens set to work to gain the confidence and friendship of the soldiers. They gave them money, invited them to eat and drink, and told them that "they also were citizens before they were soldiers, and men before they were citizens."* The soldier found that a bottle of burgundy and such language were very convincing; and those who could not be convinced by this means, were attacked by a still more irresistible sort of arms. The regiment of French guards, consisting of about 3,000 men, on which the court used greatly to depend, was seduced by the three-fold attraction of money, women, and wine.

It was since the sitting of the states general begun, that a new vigour was given to those cabals which had long been carried on in Paris, particularly in the Palais Royal which belonged to the Duke of Orleans. This building, originally a royal palace, with a public garden attached to it, had been converted into one large elegant hollow square. The duke's palace occupied only one end, the remainder being filled

* This sort of reasoning, so absurd in itself, seems peculiarly adapted to a French brain; it leads to a quick conclusion: and to men who do not take the time nor trouble to think, is plausible enough: at any rate, it produced great effects.

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with shops, taverns, hotels for lodging strangers, gaming houses, no less than three play-houses; the great bulk of what was let as lodgings, being occupied by women of the town. The middle still continued to be a garden in the form of an oblong square, in which were several small book-sellers' shops and some coffee-houses under painted pavilions. A piazza of very elegant architecture went round the whole, so that in rainy or in fair weather it was equally convenient as a promenade. The description of the Palais Royal, as it was called, is entered into, because, during the whole of the revolution, it has been a theatre of as great, and sometimes greater importance, than the assembly of the deputies.

Numbers of clubs, named so after the English manner, had been established, under the roof of this extensive building, and the protection of its master, for being exempt from the visits of the ordinary officers of the police as a royal garden, men there found safety for cabal and intrigue, when it was to be found no where else. It was from this garden that messengers were sent every two or three hours on important occasions, to communicate between the factious leaders in Paris and at Versailles. The garden itself, which used to be the resort of wit and beauty, became filled with groups of the angry looking and wretched dregs of the people, mixed,

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however, with the mechanics who had left their shops, and the lowest class of women, who had left their children and families *to work at the revolution.*

The eyes of all the factious turned naturally to Mirabeau, whose former character put villainy quite at its ease in making any sort of proposition, and whose audacity and ability rendered him capable of being useful in whatever he might undertake.

It was in the Palais Royal that every experiment upon the minds of the people was made; there treason was spoken and sedition circulated with impunity; and from thence were dispatched those messengers of confusion who have since desolated that miserable country.

At last, a sort of revolt among the French guards broke out, instigated and assisted by the people, and some of their number were secured and lodged in the abbey prison. The people seemed to take an active interest in the fate of those mutinous soldiers, who, by every military law, deserved to be severely punished. Attempts were made to break open their prison, and messengers dispatched to ask from the king their pardon, in a tone that, addressed to a sovereign, was rather that of menace than of petition. The court had not
deter-

determined what party to take, when the prison was forced, and the mutineers in question escaped without difficulty to the common asylum of insurrection, the Palais Royal; and there, under a pretence of hiding themselves, they remained in a room occupied by a woman of the town, which they entered by a sort of force; but so little was their fear of being discovered, that a small basket was hung over the windows, to collect money from the crowd that was perpetually passing or assembled below; and in the course of a few days, more than eight thousand livres were collected. Drunkenness, riot, and the pilfering of those who joined them in their retreat, prevented an account from being kept of what was afterwards received. This, however, shewed the general disposition of people of a class who were able to give money. The king had the weakness now to pardon a fault, which was become ten times greater than at first; so that the whole regiment, encouraged by the example of impunity and reward, and led on by inclination, became a band of mutineers, and, in fact, were the first to rebel when open force was resorted to.

The states general still went on; the Parisians attended it in crowds every day; and on the Sunday, the deputies of the third estate and of the low clergy went to pay visits in Paris; so that the

Parisian with one hand gave to the soldier, and with the other to the deputy.

The states had already been in this condition for three weeks, when the assembly of the nobles divided in itself, and the assembly of the clergy did the same; a minority, indeed, but not an inconsiderable one of each, having declared they would join the third estate in one common assembly.

The Duke of Orleans, finding that it was now time to shew himself, declared that he was ready to pass over at the head of a considerable number of his order, and join in the common assembly; so that the king and court, finding what they had to fear, resolved to anticipate the storm. Accordingly, on the 23d of June, the king came to the assembly, and offered to abolish all the grievances which it was known the majority of the cahiers contained. [A] This declaration, which a month sooner would have occasioned the greatest pleasure, and would have, perhaps, defeated the manœuvres of those who sought revolt and disorder, was received by the assembly with a cold indifference. When his majesty withdrew, and

[A] There are at the end, notes, consisting of such letters and papers as it is essential to know, but which could not be with propriety inserted in the body of the work.

the assembly, according to custom, should have adjourned till next day, the deputies of the third estate remained, (in their own chamber where the assembly was) and began immediately to debate very warmly, and most part of the speakers were for rejecting the offers of the king.

His majesty, finding that the assembly continued sitting, sent his master of the ceremonies with a herald, to signify his will, that they should not continue that day. The audacious Mirabeau answered, without rising up from his seat, with a loud voice and a menacing aspect, "Go," says he, "and tell your master, that we are here by the will of the people, and that we shall not depart but by the force of the bayonet."

This was the first open declaration of disobedience to his majesty, in which the whole assembly participated by their approbation, and by their continuing to sit.

It is well known, how reports are spread with rapidity and exaggerated with success, in a large city, and on an important occasion. It was reported in less than two hours after in Paris, that the assembly was threatened with the bayonet, and imagination added, that they were actually

become martyrs to their own firmness, and their duty to their constituents.

This open act of firmness and audacity on the side of the deputies not being resisted, either by force or any other mode, by the court, was considered as a fair trial of strength and as a decided victory. The deputies of the third estate gained courage, and those of the two other orders, finding the discussions were not likely to terminate, begun individually to quit their respective assemblies, and join the assembly of the third estate. This method was certainly very irregular, but there was now no rule for any thing; and as the system is in all matters of revolution, that a point gained is a victory obtained, no matter how, this desertion of their order, and the interest of their constituents,* was greatly applauded, and the deserters honourably received. The hopes of being well treated, in case of an insurrection of the people, acted forcibly on individuals, and anonymous letters were sent to many of them, which strengthened both the hopes and fears which they might have concerning the conduct to be adopted.

* As the assemblies of nobles chose deputies quite distinctly from the other assemblies, the point of their remaining separate was, in fact, determined; for if they were to be confounded, it should have been by a new election, in which the electors should have been mingled in one body.

Mirabeau, who had gained as much credit by his speech on the 23d of June with the assembly, as the assembly itself had gained with the people, now became a leading man, and conceived the project of writing an address to the king, in the name of the assembly, requesting him to send away the troops who were surrounding Versailles and the capital, who, he said, were only useful on the frontiers against enemies, but who could do no good in the interior of the country, their arms directed against the representatives of the nation, employed in seeking what tended to make the people happy.

This address, written with great elegance and force of language, was read by Mirabeau to the assembly, which was unbounded in its applause: a second reading was demanded, and again applauded. The address was then resolved upon, and presented by a deputation of the members, who waited on the king.

The court began now seriously to think of one effort before all should be lost. There were great numbers of soldiers, as they imagined, at their command. There was a camp of twenty thousand men within a mile of Paris, and military quartered every where in and about both Paris and Versailles. The ancient courtiers seemed awakened from their lethargy, and assembled round their king; but M. Necker was an insurmountable

barrier in the way; it was impossible to take any steps without his knowledge, and they could never expect to gain his consent to what they proposed to do.

The plan that was laid, had it been well put in execution, might perhaps have re-established the ancient system completely, but the same want of energy on the part of those employed to put it in execution, that had all along been evident, and which has been evident in all the operations of that party ever since, by misgiving, overturned the monarchy completely in the space of a few days.

The plan was simply this, M. Necker, and those who acted with him, were to be displaced, and sent to a distance. Ministers attached to the court, and whose fidelity was known, were to be put in their place, and a loan of one hundred and twenty-five millions Tournois was secured amongst the monied people, with which sum the court could go on, at least for some time; the states general was to be dissolved by the king's simple authority, if it would not accept his offers, and it is never to be doubted that force was to have been employed in case of resistance.

This plan was arranged with a secrecy that did credit to those who conducted it, and accordingly on Saturday, at a late hour, when the assembly
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was dispersed till Monday ; each of the ministers got his dismissal in the usual form, and not being ignorant of what was meant, each departed that same night with all the secrecy possible. Such was the secrecy with which this was performed, that though M. Necker quitted his house at Versailles at eleven o'clock on the Saturday evening, it was not known amongst the servants of the house before ten o'clock on the Sunday morning : it began to be known in Versailles at eleven, and was spread abroad in Paris about one. The consternation was prodigious and general, but perhaps would not have been attended with any violent movement, had not the court by its imprudence and weakness rendered resistance necessary.

The deputies who remained at Versailles, dispatched messengers to Paris ; they expected to be all massacred or imprisoned, at least. The people of Paris expected little better ; their credulity was great, and their fear greater ; so that under such apprehensions it only wanted a signal given to make an insurrection break forth, and this signal was not long wanting. Mirabeau, and all those who had openly acted against the court, saw their last hour they imagined approach ; those who had planned and acted more secretly, apprehended their actions were known, and would be punished ; there was not any room for hesitation or delay ;
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the combat was begun, and it was become absolutely necessary to act immediately, or sink for ever; it was not now to the leaders, a speculation of interest and intrigue, it was an affair of life and death, from the Duke of Orleans to the lowest emissary. Every means that they could command of money, or other, was employed to overcome this difficulty, the greatest and the gravest possible, but which, whatever was the event, must be the last, as it must end in death or victory.

On the Sunday, in the evening, the approach of the military, with cannon, to a public walk, where the Parisians amused themselves with their families, brought things to a crisis. Some persons thinking themselves protected from the cannon, by the presence of the great numbers of women and children who were there, threw a few stones at the soldiers; a sort of battle ensued, and several were killed, and others wounded on both sides.

As it is not to write the history of the revolution that we are employed, those circumstances, the most striking in themselves are what should be dwelt upon the least, because they are already better known than any others, and have not an immediate connection with our plan, which is to trace opinions, their results, and the modes of spreading them. It becomes therefore a matter of importance to know how the soldiery were
gained.

gained; the faults of the court in losing their affections; the causes of the battle of the Thuilleries, (as it was called,) are also important to be known; but a relation of how it was conducted, is not essential to our purpose; the plan of the work is not sufficiently extensive to admit of such details, however interesting they may be. No blame can be laid upon the people in this conjuncture; self-preservation was their object; force was become necessary, and it was equally just and natural to employ it.

The Prince de Lambesk, who commanded this fatal expedition, begun it imprudently, and finished it the same; for except giving the people to know what they had to expect, it had no other immediate consequence. The military were withdrawn from the spot, having irritated, but not intimidated; and the frightened inhabitants of a city, where there were at least seven hundred thousand souls, were left time to rally, and to take measures for insuring themselves victory.

The night was past by the leaders of the people in combining their plans, and by themselves in seizing upon all the arms that could be procured. Previous to the election of the deputies, Paris had been divided into sixty different portions, called sections; one church in each section was employed for the primary assemblies, who

who chose among themselves electors, who all assembled at the archbishop's palace, there to chuse the deputies. These sections served as points of re-union to the citizens, who now assembled there, all ranks promiscuously; for the danger was general. Though there were undoubtedly many persons who had nothing to fear from the court, they had a great deal to fear from their fellow citizens, if they did not join them, which they all did; and thus the court united the whole of that great city in one mind and interest by its imprudence. Had the refractory deputies been seized, that same night, the plan might have yet succeeded, but this was left undone, and thereby the affair entirely failed.

From this time the revolt obtained a physical existence; and the greater force was on the side of the revolted, so that the undecided individual knew, by embracing their cause, he had least to fear. This is the rubicon of revolutions; it is the belief that force is on the side of government that constitutes its force; the contrary idea produces its immediate fall, and whether the opinion is at first founded in fact or not, it becomes realized in an instant; for force lies where it is thought to lie, as the greater number are determined only by the simple feelings of fear and of hope.

It is not in what has hitherto happened that the democratic party is to be blamed. A few individuals were certainly guilty of wrong intentions from the beginning, but by no means were the people, who wished for liberty and happiness; when that becomes a crime, life will become a burthen, and the only fit retreat for a man who has any spirit or mind, will be the silent grave. It was more than probable that the court would not have been faithful to the offers made on the 3d of June, had they been accepted; the people wanted a bill of rights, and it was a bill of rights alone that ought to have satisfied them; and those who refused it, certainly may reproach themselves with being, in part, the occasion of what has since happened; they did not participate either in the cruelties or injustices of which they have been the victims, but they were nevertheless in a great measure the cause. It is too late to be reasonable and just when we are forced into it. Such conduct excites suspicion, blame, and contempt, while a contrary behaviour obtains confidence, esteem, and gratitude.

A greater lesson can never be given to those who govern than this, and if the people and their leaders, who turned to advantage with such address the faults of the court, had been instructed by them, and learned justice and moderation when it came to their turn to reign, they might
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long ago have enjoyed that happiness which a contrary behaviour has so completely banished from their miserable country. It is with reluctance that we can vindicate the conduct of men for a moment, who have since been guilty of such crimes as make nature shudder, and will not only remain a stain upon their nation, but will reflect dishonour on the whole human race.

CHAP. V.

First motives of the insurrection good, but soon became bad—Multitude armed—Bastile, &c. taken—Beginning of cruelties—Adroit manœuvre by which all France was armed—King visits Paris—Triumph of the people is complete—JACOBIN CLUB begun its affiliation, and destruction of liberty they occasion—Mistakes in England on this head.

IF the beginning of this history has been employed in relating the misconduct and follies of a state of society, where prejudice in favour of what was ancient was carried too far; what remains, is destined to paint the miseries and crimes into which men fall, when they, under the idea of their being philosophers, lose all respect for experience, thinking that they are getting rid only of prejudice.

The motive of the multitude being liberty and happiness, was only what they have in common with all mankind, but the unexampled vanity with which their first successes were followed, their ignorance of what liberty consisted in, and the cruelty and want of any attention to principle, with which their possession of power was accompanied, are proofs that violent revolutions destroy the

moral principle in man, by setting ambition and interest in too powerful a manner to work; at the same time that by setting a great object continually before the eyes of the individual, he passes over without reluctance what would in other times have made him shudder only to have thought of.

The enthusiasm inspired by continually speaking and acting in a common cause, and sharing a common danger, gives a sort of electric shock that is communicated from one eye to another, that raises the man above himself in courage, and sinks him below the brute in savageness. The happiness of men, and extremes of all sorts, are at variance; they are by no means, therefore, the friends of the people, who open a door to excesses; and those who may in future attempt such a thing, will be doubly to blame; for the revolutionists of whom we have been speaking, were, perhaps, ignorant of the evils they were bringing on; those who follow their example, will not have the same excuse, for the experiment has been very clearly made, and its result is recorded in the blood of most of those who were guilty of such temerity.

The Monday which succeeded the battle of the Thuilleries, found all the inhabitants of Paris either armed or assembled. Their sections assumed the appearance of so many federal states, having
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the town-house for its center, to which deputies from the different sections were sent. Paris became thereby an organised military government, capable of acting with some degree of unity. The prisons were opened; and the suspected persons disarmed; a green cockade was ordered to be worn by all those who were *for the people*, as they termed it, but having reflected, that the livery of the Count d'Artois was green, it was changed for the party-coloured cockade, which has been called the national cockade ever since, and which was the livery of the chief of the faction, Philip Duke of Orleans.

The whole of the Monday was thus spent in securing Paris against the attack supposed to be meditated by the troops; the court affrighted, or at least astonished at the tumult it had occasioned, remained inactive. Not one effort was made either to seize the ringleaders of the people, or to dissolve the assembly at Versailles, nor to dispatch messengers to explain the affair to the distant provinces. This inexcusable pusillanimity and neglect was improved to advantage by its enemies. The barriers or gates, where duty was collected on merchandizes on entering into Paris, were kept shut, and surrounded by an immense crowd of people, so that neither the peaceable who wanted to retire from danger, nor those who might wish to depart with design, were

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allowed

allowed to go. This single circumstance occasioned an alarm in the whole kingdom, as the post and other daily communications failed, in the middle of summer, and in fine weather, the minds of the people, already extremely uneasy every where, were prepared for some great event, and being reduced to the last pitch of consternation, were ready to receive with alacrity whatever impulse might be given to them by the party that should remain victorious.

At the same time that this was passing in Paris, the assembly, afraid to separate, continued to sit, thereby appearing to do from firmness, what was really done from fear; for it was much less dangerous for each member to continue in the common hall, than to venture to go home to his lodgings. The same feeling acting upon all, produced the same effect on all, and the assembly was permanent. It probably was this that disconcerted the court, for it is impossible that the first steps of Saturday and Sunday could have been taken without an intention to follow them up with vigour and efficacy; but as they were followed by no measures of any sort, something must have disconcerted their plan, and it was most probably the permanence of the assembly.

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The court should have been prepared for vigorous measures, as it could not be supposed that its enemies, having all at stake, would want energy, until all hope was gone of saving themselves by energy. The assembly endeavoured to display that serenity and firmness which were so necessary to impose both upon its enemies and its friends. News from the deputies to Paris, and from Paris to the deputies, could not go freely, but it went so as to assure the leaders of mutual support, and to inform them, in general terms, of the manner in which things went on. During this time, all minds being set to work in Paris, and safety rather than revolt being the common object, the morning of the memorable Tuesday, the 14th of July, began by a more regular plan of operations.

All the arms in the workshops of the armourers having been seized on Sunday evening, those belonging to individuals had been produced on the Monday, but still that was far from sufficient to arm one hundred and fifty thousand persons. As there were arms supposed to be in the Bastille, the arsenal, and the hospital of invalids, different detachments of a mob collected early in the morning before the town-house, went from thence to each of these places, but so little was an attack of the sort expected, that at the arsenal and the hospital, not the least resistance was made. The French guards

being debauched from their duty, as we have already said, mixing with the mob, gave a sort of conduct, regularity, and appearance of force to these detachments, which intimidated those who might otherwise, perhaps, have attempted to resist. The numerous detachment which went against the hospital having procured a considerable quantity of arms, marched immediately against the camp that was pitched in the neighbourhood; the soldiers, partly debauched like the French guards, and the officers without superior orders, astonished at this audacity, and totally ignorant of the number and force of those who had come against them, and imagining that the people were every where victorious, abandoned their tents, and marched off without resisting.

The party that went against the Bastile, alone met with some difficulty from the nature of the building; it was impossible to walk straight into it, as it was built with all the precautions of an ancient fortress, though quite incapable of any regular resistance: without any advanced works, and the embrasures of the cannons (of a small calibre) seventy feet from the ground, those who might attack the drawbridge and the gate, run but little risk. The strength of the gate was the real measure of the force of the Bastile; had it been occupied by a garrison, and supplied with what is necessary for a siege; but the garrison

son consisted of a few invalids, without provisions for one day, and commanded by a man who had been very capable of acting as a keeper of a prison, but was very incapable of defending a fortress as a governor. [Note B.]

The state of the Bastille only permitting a negative defence, the proper way would have been to have kept the gate shut, and to have waited, without any offensive act: but de Lawnay, the governor, lost whatever presence of mind he had; a few random shot, which went to a distance, were fired from the cannon on the top, and some musketry discharged from the narrow windows that are to be seen in most old fortifications, for the purpose of using small arms. This only exasperated the mob, which from its numbers, and the situation of the streets, could not retreat, as the crowds which were out of all danger would not make way for those who were foremost, and who run some little risk. This tumultuous attack was continued from eleven o'clock in the morning till about four in the afternoon, at which time the gates were opened, upon a promise from those who directed the people at the town-house, of mercy to the governor and garrison. All the accounts of bravery on one side, and resistance on the other, which were spread abroad with industry, were not merely exaggerated, they were absolutely without foundation, though they were far from being without utility to the popular side.

On a pretence of treason, the governor and the sub-governor were carried to the Place de Greve, before the town-house (with all manner of blows and ill-usage on the road) where their brains were blown out, and, shortly after, their heads cut off. Two private invalids were hanged to the lamp iron, opposite the town-house, and were the first sacrificed by that mode, which was for some time so popular and so highly in vogue amongst the mob in all the towns in France. The Prevot des Marchands, who had presided at the Hotel de Ville, was treated in the same manner as the governor, because he was supposed to have betrayed the people, when, in fact, he had only betrayed his king. Thus the man who had presided over the revolt during about thirty-six hours, and who had signed the order for wearing the party-coloured cockade, fell a sacrifice to those passions which he had assisted to rouse, and endeavoured, without either fortitude or abilities, to direct. He was thus the first instance in the present revolution of the danger that there is in conducting the people, as de Lawnay was of the folly of believing them; for, when under the influence of fear, the people stop at nothing that is thought conducive to safety, and, when masters of the field, their victims are pointed out by their caprice.

The taking of the Bastile furnished the people of Paris with an ample subject for boasting and admira-

admiration, as well as with materials for inflaming the minds of the people, as they got possession of a large collection of printed books and manuscripts that had been suppressed by government, and, besides these, of the registers of that famous prison,

The success of this day which had put the arsenal, the Bastile, and a great quantity of arms in possession of the people of Paris, was a death stroke to those who supported the court. They now considered themselves as undone, and such of them as yet remained in Paris endeavoured to escape by every means in their power. There was now a complete change on the countenances and in the minds of the inhabitants; the consternation of the two preceding days gave place to a joyful triumph. Their own bravery was celebrated by themselves, and magnified without difficulty on account of the confusion and general enthusiasm. They thought that they had taken the Bastile by storm and irresistible effort. The French guards were at the service of the citizens, who, by a sudden, but not an unnatural transition, displayed a confidence and security equal to their former fear; the only anxiety that now remained, was concerning the assembly at Versailles.

Events not only had succeeded with such rapidity, but had been so multiplied, that it was im-

possible to send to Versailles any distinct or true account of what had happened; accordingly, the news that arrived in the evening and night between the Tuesday and Wednesday, were all of a very confused nature. It was, however, generally understood and believed, as in Paris, that the victory had been obtained by unexampled prodigies of valour. The heads of the men who had been murdered, having been carried upon pikes all through Paris as a spectacle to the people, had afforded not only a certain proof of the reality of the victory, but of the ferocious disposition of the conquerors. The whole being then seen under the complication of circumstances the most capable of astonishing, did not fail to produce upon the deputies and the court a complete change.

The assembly, which had considered its existence as menaced every hour, took now the tone of conquerors, and the deputies of the two orders who had hitherto seemed to join the third estate with reluctance, now assisted with cordiality; for, though they knew that the victories of Paris might be false or exaggerated, they were sensible that the court was incapable of making any effort in their favour.

The form of the states general, deranged in the beginning by the new manner of election, had since
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been totally changed, by an early exercise of power, in altering the name from that of States General to *National Assembly*. Secured by their own perseverance, by the energy of the people of Paris, and by the pusillanimity of the court, from any personal danger, the deputies assumed another tone: it was resolved, that they should dispatch messengers through the whole kingdom to inform their constituents of what had happened; to rejoice with them at the fall of a faction, which meant, as they pretended, to have burnt Paris, dissolved, and perhaps massacred the assembly, and established despotism on a more firm basis than ever. This was a natural enough measure, and something of the sort was even absolutely unavoidable. Here begun to be seen the immense advantage which a numerous assembly enjoys in swaying a whole people, when actuated by one general interest. Without loss of time, each deputy wrote to his own province, and the assembly composed a general relation of the affair, in which, if the bravery of the Parisians was augmented, their own firmness was not diminished. In the state of France, all intelligence having been suspended for three days, this produced completely the effect intended. The whole of France turned to the side of the Parisians, and approved their measures: but a simple approbation was not what the leaders of the revolt wanted; they wanted support and participation, that they might run no
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risque from a change. The administration of the public affairs in every town and in every province belonged to people placed by the king, who could not expect to be trusted, or remain in office, if the revolution continued. From the governors of provinces, and magistrates of towns, who had the administration of all public affairs in their hands, opposition was therefore to be dreaded, and was not to be risked. We are now going to see the most curious and most successful manœuvre that has ever been practised in any revolution, and it was Mirabeau by whom it was planned and conducted.

Before there was any time to recover from the fear, astonishment, or enthusiasm, which the first news had spread, men were seen going through the whole of France, men who were strangers in the places through which they went, announcing the arrival of ten thousand brigands, or plunderers. The brigands existed no where, and were dreaded every where. Every town in France, in proportion as the rumour arrived, felt itself in danger, nearly as Paris had done on the Sunday and Monday; so that they armed, and in a few days after came a decree of the assembly regulating the national guards of Paris, and directing every town in the kingdom to follow the same plan. The authority of the assembly might probably not have been sufficient to put arms in the hands
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of the people, contrary to the will of the magistrates, and for the avowed purpose of revolt; but the fear of the brigands, whom nobody ever saw, and every body heard of, had already done that, so that it was now too late for the magistrates to attempt to resist, and the example of the Prevot des Marchands, at Paris, was a sort of hint what the consequences of such an attempt might naturally be, and therefore served to co-operate with the other equal and active measures which had been taken.

Thus was an armed militia, amounting already to above two millions and a half of people, instituted in less than fifteen days over the whole extent of France, and not only were they instituted, but in activity, and in a condition to operate whatever the assembly might order, or their own views of things might point out. It was a general force, capable of receiving an impulse from one common center, but possessed of an enthusiastic energy, that, had it always been directed to one good end, would have constituted a power such as no nation ever possessed in the world.

While the leaders of the people created, as if by a supernatural effort, a new military, as well as civil power, all through the kingdom, the court relinquished the small degree of authority
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which it had till then possessed. Amongst the cries of victory, imprecations and threats of vengeance against the enemies of the people had been heard in Paris, and it was reported at Versailles in the same breath, that the Bastille was taken, the governor murdered, together with all those who remained faithful to the court; that their heads were carried in triumph by the people, who had threatened to march to Versailles to be revenged in the same manner on its oppressors. The Count d'Artois, famous for his pleasures, his expenses, and what was termed his aristocracy, together with all the new ministers, were menaced. Between the moment of receiving this intelligence and their flight, the interval was but short. The Count d'Artois, with all his family, left Versailles that same night; the new ministers, who had not yet begun to act, followed his example; the Prince of Condé from other motives carried off his family likewise; and, in less than twenty-four hours, the court of Versailles was almost deserted, and those who remained shared in the inquietude and astonishment of the royal family.

It was of too great importance for the assembly to be able to guide the movements of Paris, for the attempt not to be made; accordingly, on Wednesday evening a numerous deputation of the three orders arrived to fraternise with the leaders of the insurrection. The different dresses of the
orders

orders at first excited amongst the people a sensation of approbation and pleasure. The nobles displayed for the last time their elegant Spanish habiliments, and the people saw with pleasure, which soon changed to a different sensation, those descendants of the feudal lords reduced to the class of simple citizens. The simple and inelegant, or rather boyish, dress of their own deputies afforded at first view a contrast that by no means was agreeable, even when they reflected on what was, in times past; but, when they turned their eyes to the present moment, and found the deputies were all of equal importance, with this difference, that the deputy of the third estate was playing a willing part, while the other acted a forced one, vexation and anger soon succeeded.

The people of Paris, equally occupied to give orders, and to execute them, had determined in their sections on the destruction of the Bastile, and it was actually begun. An immense crowd had mounted upon its parapet, and by mere human force had begun to throw down the large stones of which it was built. The deputies arrived from Versailles confirmed the decree of its destruction, and mounted upon its battlements to encourage the people who were at work. The Bastile had been employed only for prisoners sent by *lettres de cachet* without any trial; it was, therefore, considered, from its peculiar appearance

ance and public situation, as a sort of despotism personified, and there were few who did not feel a pleasure in seeing it fall; the enthusiasm of liberty was not a little increased when the people saw the nodding plumes of the feudal lords commanding the destruction of this remain of feudal power. It had a theatrical sort of effect, and inspired people more and more with the love of liberty, and a hatred for despotism.

Two men had rendered themselves conspicuous in the assembly, *Monf. Bailly*, an academician and astronomer of a good private character, and who had already been president, who had distinguished himself for his presence of mind and firmness, and who was strongly imbibed with the ambition and philosophy of the revolution. The Duke of Orleans and *Mirabeau* saw in him a man fit for their purpose; and by raising a man of reputed integrity, and a man of learning, to such a situation, the confidence of the people would be obtained, and men of letters in general be attached to the revolution. This last was not, perhaps, immediately any great object, but promised ultimately to be so; for, as the new principles spread amongst the people were all of them supported by false reasonings, it was of a double importance to secure the support of those men, who, as friends, could support the new principles, or who, as enemies, might destroy them. *M. Bailly*
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was proposed as mayor of Paris, the name of Prevot des Marchands being declared infamous, with the memory of the unfortunate de Fleffelles, who had last bore it.

M. de la Fayette, already publicly known, not for any distinguished conduct in America, but for his having been there, his having the honour to call himself the friend of Gen. Washington, his having distinguished himself as a friend of liberty, such as they understood it in France, was proclaimed by popular assemblies, commander of the armed multitude.

M. de la Fayette was one of those men who, with a great concealed ambition, had patience enough to wait for opportunity to gratify it; and who, being allied by marriage to the family of Noailles, one of the richest, most numerous, and most intriguing at court, was powerfully stimulated and supported. La Fayette's other passions being entirely subservient to his vanity and ambition, he had few of those vices that hurt a public man with the public. Although not agreeable to the Duke of Orleans, who would have preferred a man that loved money to an ambitious man, he was not at that time very disagreeable; and there was not any method of bettering the matter; he, therefore, met with his support also, and as both he and M. Bailly were of the first
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deputation, they were proposed and proclaimed by the people. Insurrection was then, to use their own expression, organised, and two ambitious men placed at its head; the first of whom laboured under great personal obligations to the king,* and the second was going quite contrary to his instructions as a representative of the order of the nobles.

A system, however plausible it may otherwise be, that is founded upon a false basis, must in the end lead its followers to ruin and error. Bailly and La Fayette vindicated their conduct under the plea of the general interest, the good of the people, and the cause of liberty. Vain illusion and despicable subterfuge! as if the interests of mankind and their happiness could ever permanently be advanced by what was in itself criminal; as if *their* standing forward to head the revolt were necessary, which consummate vanity alone could make them think. Mirabeau had never received the favours of a court, and he had sometimes felt its oppression; he did not, therefore, add ingratitude to his crimes; his conduct was not unnatural, and his faults, great as they were, might be forgotten; but the mayor and

* M. Bailly had a pension from his majesty, and apartments in the palace of the Louvre. His other faults might have been forgiven him, had he not added such black ingratitude, which ought not and never can be forgiven.

the commander had not the pecuniary necessities of Mirabeau to plead as an excuse, and Mirabeau had no ingratitude with which he could accuse himself.

We shall see in what follows, that though these men were unfit for a revolution, yet they were not unfit for the beginning of one; on the contrary, perhaps men of steady principle and firm conduct would not have served the cause in question so well. Anarchy was the business, and the best men to bring it about were such, as, having double views and little means, make their court to every party, and are useful to none in particular. It is true, that such men can never expect to ride out the storm, but that is their own affair; and we never see, that there is any difficulty in finding those who are willing to try, when they have it in their power.

It will be an important lesson for all future nations, as well as for individuals, to observe how their first errors ended, in bringing destruction upon all those who assisted in this revolution. The only moment that the revolutionists had of real glory, and where they are not to be blamed, was in the interval of the few days between the dismissal of M. Necker and their being masters of the public force: that short interval had been employed in exertions, which were astonishing

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for their activity and energy, and which, being in self-defence, can never be questioned as to their motive; and if, afterwards, it turned to a disgraceful revolution, it must be imputed to the ignorance and bad intention of the members of the assembly, who, not contented with turning to advantage an insurrection, must endeavour to perpetuate it, by adopting it as a principle, that to revolt was a sacred duty. They pretended to copy and to quote Rousseau, but in what manner did they do it? The author of the Social Compact could never have conceived an order of things, where perpetual change being adopted as a first principle, there could exist no compact.

If the court abused power when it was in possession of it, and if it let slip opportunity, the revolutionary leaders did the same. As to abusing power, they have done nothing but that from the time we speak of to the present hour; and as to letting slip opportunity, they now let slip one which will never return.

The first insurrection being in a manner ended by the complete victory obtained, there was an opportunity of obtaining a *bill of rights*, and establishing law and order, before the people, who had only been the instruments, should become accustomed to excesses, which would render the establishment of law and order very difficult, if
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not impracticable. It is well known, that peace and order can never be maintained amongst a turbulent people but by force and despotism; those who love liberty should, therefore, take great care not to destroy the love of order and obedience to law in the general mass of the people, as a strong building can never be constructed of rotten materials; if, at that time, the leaders of the popular party could have established the new order of things, as we had done in England, before riot, pillage, and massacre, had become habitual to the people, it might have been a short and a happy revolution; but they let slip the occasion, perhaps, from ignorance of the consequences, but, probably, because it did not suit their particular views.

Had the leaders of the assembly been men of property and of plain good sense, as were our English barons at Runnymede, they would have been contented with laying a solid foundation for liberty; but they were mostly men of no property, smatterers in metaphysics and philosophy, who, thinking themselves equal to any task, would not be content with laying the foundations of a better order of things; they must destroy the old order to establish a new one in its place, and risk the safety and welfare of their country for the sake of wild theories which they had invented, and which were totally impracticable.

In the deserted state of the court, his majesty had been at the assembly, to testify his constant desire of making his people happy, and his will and intention to co-operate in every measure that might be thought conducive to such an end; but it was now too late; he was willing to make a sacrifice of power which he no longer possessed, and offered to his enemies what they had already obtained; so that he only increased their pride and audacity by this humiliating step; humiliating, because it was forced, and doubly so, because it was rejected; though the same offer made at an earlier period, in a willing manner, would have been equally honourable and useful.

The Duke de Liancourt, the friend of his king, and of the people, though a courtier, and rather too much of a reformer, was the only person who would venture, or, at least, who thought proper to speak seriously to his majesty about some mode of reconciliation with the people; he advised him to go to Paris to shew himself, and to convince the people that he was their friend. Louis XVI. who never refused any personal sacrifice, and who, as he has since shewn, was not destitute of resolution and courage, immediately undertook the dangerous and painful journey.

It was announced in Paris early on Friday morning, that his majesty would be at the town
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house at two o'clock in the day. On his road he was met by the armed guard of Paris, who lined the way for eight miles with a double row of the new-made soldiers, forming a motley, but to him a horrible spectacle. The greatest part were armed with pikes, sticks, and swords, and a few with muskets, for there were near 200,000 men, and they had neither uniforms nor leaders. Some of the revolted soldiers were interspersed in the ranks.

It was circulated in Paris, that the Duke of Orleans had gone to Versailles, and on his knees requested the king to pay this visit to his people, though nothing was more false; and it is fair, from every circumstance, to conclude, that he would rather have prevented it, had it been in his power.

The tactics of the Jacobins begun already to be put openly in practice. Men, whom nobody knew, and who were not in any ostensible situation, ran along the armed ranks, and threatened those who should shew any marks of favour or approbation to his majesty. The factious were afraid that a reconciliation might take place, and their hopes and importance be blasted for ever. The monarch, therefore, arrived in the midst of an awful silence, mounted the Hotel de Ville, where he was received by M. Bailly, who in-

sulted him with an equivocal and ill-turned compliment on presenting him the keys of the city. As no plan was laid by either party to make any solid arrangement, this journey could be of little advantage to his majesty, but was construed by his enemies as a sanction to every thing that had been done, and certainly it had that appearance, and afforded an excellent reason for all the provinces to follow the example of Paris. Whether it happened by accident or design, this ill-fated monarch was always led into measures that were fatal to himself; he had now arboured the cockade of revolt, the livery of the house of Orleans, and those who yet were attached to the monarchy, and who might have been prepared to make a stand, could not any longer find a pretence for doing so; and, at the same time, the king derived not one single advantage. A promise to recall the ministers that had been dismissed was made, and the applause of the people, which were now permitted by the same unknown emissaries who had commanded silence, might rather be considered as cries of victory than of approbation. The king returned to Versailles after a short stay in Paris, assured of the reality of the revolt, but at the same time convinced, that the people intended him no personal injury, and that he and his family might sleep in safety.

Fresh couriers were dispatched into the provinces, to announce that the king had approved of all that had been done, that the true friends of his majesty should follow his example, and acknowledge the power and justice of the nation. As the king was an insulated man in his own dominions, without ministers and friends, it was impossible for him to moderate, in any degree, the full effect of these measures, which, otherwise, might have been done, and which, if done in time, might have hindered those excesses which men naturally run into, when they find their career uninterrupted by opposition.

A sort of tranquillity succeeded for some days in Paris, and the well-intentioned citizen thought the revolution was finished. Surely, said he, if it was to diminish the power of the crown that we revolted, that is done; if it was to destroy the Bastile, that is done; was it to have back the old ministers, in whom they had confidence, they found, likewise, that it was accomplished. They conceived, likewise, as they could act as they pleased, and overturn every thing with impunity, they were free; they thought, they enjoyed liberty already, and that of consequence their evils were all at an end. They did not know, that it was to give their representatives the pleasure of framing an absurd constitution, and of overturning the religion, the laws, and the property

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perty of the country, of corrupting the manners of all, and of ruining their fortunes, that all this had been begun, and that, of consequence, it would not be so speedily finished: all this they knew but too late, and then, in revenge, they taught their representatives their error. The representatives, on their part, were foolish enough to think, that they would always be able to command murder and pillage, and to reap the fruits of it; and they did not know, that the day would come when the knife that they had sharpened would be turned upon themselves; they never calculated, that in a state of revolution men must be changed as well as measures, and that it must infallibly arrive sooner or later, that their principles and themselves would become equally disgusting, and that he who imagines to make perpetually a tool of others finds himself deceived,

The Jacobin sect, which now were the masters, being all-powerful, holding the reins of government in its hands, set seriously to work in securing the continuance of that power which had been obtained over the people.

As it was impossible for any set of men to make themselves certain of always regulating elections, where the general mass of the people was to assist in chusing the magistrates and other authorities in

in the state, it became necessary to evade the consequences of this principle without destroying the principle itself.

We are now going to see another of those curious and adroit manœuvres, by which the people were completely juggled out of their freedom by the same persons, who pretended to make such efforts and sacrifices, to secure it to them upon a foundation so solid as not to be overturned.

Let a set of men in this nation commemorate the glorious revolution that gave liberty to France if they will, we may dispute about their intentions, which may be pure, perhaps; but there can in that case be no dispute about their judgment and knowledge of the revolution, they may be pardoned on account of their ignorance, for they know not what they do. The revolution changed but did not abolish despotism in France, and the change was from a mild and regular government, to a ferocious and disorderly one.

The prosperity of Charles IX. and of Catherine of Medicis were no doubt prayed for by the college of cardinals, because they had murdered 80,000 innocent men for the sake religion; just as the 14th of July was celebrated by certain *amateurs* of liberty in England; but the cardinals and the amateurs of liberty, whether were they ignorant
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or guilty? Did the former think the Creator or the Saviour of mankind delighted in blood and murder? or did the latter think that a revolt which overturned a mild despotism, to establish a ferocious one, was favourable to liberty? Their own hearts could only answer this question; but we must allow that they were equally ignorant of what constitutes true religion or true liberty, who were capable of approving of such transactions.

The leaders having already felt that it was impossible to obtain their ends by establishing liberty, and equally sensible that the appearance of it was necessary, as that alone could obtain for them the support of the people, set to work with their usual energy, intelligence, and success, and the JACOBIN SOCIETY WAS INSTITUTED.

Whilst, on one hand, they worked in making every place be filled by persons chosen by the people, which seems to be the road to liberty and to the reform of abuses; the Jacobin club established in Paris, and composed of the ringleaders of the revolution, both in and out of the assembly, begun by exciting the inhabitants of all the other towns in France to imitate them. The club in Paris corresponded directly with eleven hundred, and upwards, of these societies, which eleven hundred societies had each their circles of clubs in inferior towns and villages, with which they

they corresponded; so that the total number of clubs amounted to about fifteen thousand.

As these clubs were therefore so numerous, and carried on a very active and vigorous correspondence; and as they consisted of members actuated with one spirit, there was no difficulty of regulating almost all public affairs; and when they could not regulate, they could counteract any measure, as whom they could not counteract they could denounce. That they did so, we shall see instances perpetually, for the history of the revolution furnishes them in abundance; but as these clubs were self-created, as they were composed of such men as chose to assemble together, the government could not be called one founded upon the general opinion, nor upon the general will, as it was a self-created power that ruled.

The affiliation of the clubs, as it was termed, was an invention the most inimical to liberty that history has upon record, and the more so, that it deludes the people, by making the miserable voter think that he is free, that it is his own representative that governs, while it is only the Jacobin club. That the conclusion which we have drawn is just, probably no person will venture to deny, for it would be going beyond what the Jacobins themselves have ever ventured, for any one to meet the question fairly; we may therefore be allowed

lowed to call a government despotic which is the opposite of liberty, and to say that it is a very dangerous sort of despotism, which assumes the form of liberty. The friends of that system can have only one allegation to make in its favour, that as the clubs were numerous and self-created, they probably consisted of the majority of the citizens. To this, facts are the best answer.

First of all, in Paris, the Jacobin club did never amount to eighteen hundred. The majority of this club, which might be only about one thousand persons, could not be said to be an assembly of the people of Paris, where the total number of inhabitants was above seven hundred thousand. At Rouen, where the number of inhabitants was above seventy thousand, the Jacobin club consisted of about six hundred, and in the other towns of the kingdom, nearly in the same proportion. Allowing then the utmost latitude in favour of the calculation, the associated Jacobins never amounted to more than one in twenty of the male inhabitants; they therefore were wrong in calling themselves the nation.

It may still be said, that the nineteen out of twenty who were not represented by not being in the clubs, were free to be members if they chose. The answer to this is, that besides the absurdity, not to say the impossibility of the majority of the inha-

inhabitants of a country being members of a club, and assisting at sittings held two or three times a week, what right had any portion of the nation to insist upon such a condition, which was not consistent with freedom? What right had the Jacobins to say, we will rule over you, unless you join in our clubs, unless you leave your business, and vote with us, unless you assist at our debates, and aid in our correspondence with the other clubs? What imposed such a condition upon a people who had thrown off the yoke of despotism in order to be free? But there were, besides this, means employed by the leaders, to prevent the clubs from becoming too numerous, men who were moderate in their principles, who did not applaud with enthusiasm the projects of the popular leaders, or who attended seldom, were denounced, threatened, and expelled. In times of crisis, there was still another expedient worthy of the French revolution, which was declaring themselves permanent; so that at any time of the day or night, the president, or vice-president, assisted with the secretaries, and a few members, could carry on the correspondence and pass resolutions; in short, the whole was an infringement on the rights of the people, of the most complete in its nature, that ever was known.

In Turkey, and in Morocco, the people know under what despotism they groan; they know
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who their rulers are, and they know that whatever injustice they may be guilty of towards individuals, they must have some regard to the general interest, to the preservation of the whole. They have the satisfaction too of complaining to a friend in secret of their misfortunes; but the miserable French slave, who thinks himself a free citizen, does not know who his masters are. He dares not complain, because every one around him considers that their miseries are the effects of freedom and philosophy, and like the philosopher Pangloss, though ruined and miserable, he has been taught to say, that all is as well as possible.

In the first moments of the revolution, when the assembly was only occupied in pulling down the ancient system, the emissaries of the clubs were every where much more popular than the magistrates, who were suspected of attachment to the ancient government; and as the assembly proceeded in organizing the new government, care was taken to preserve the power of the clubs, by putting so many forms and delays in the way of the executive government, that it was impossible for it to put in force any measures that were not agreeable to the clubs. The king, according to the constitution which was afterwards made, could not send any orders directly to those who were to execute them; the minister for the home department must correspond with the directors of the department

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into eighty-three, of which France was divided; those directors, when assembled, must apply to directors of districts, which were subdivisions of the departments; and, lastly, these were to give their orders to the municipalities. The time for putting in execution such orders was more or less, according to circumstances, but was in all cases considerable; whereas the Jacobin club of Paris could write directly to the club in the municipality, and either be prepared to support or oppose the measure in question. Thus it was that the sailing of troops from Brest to protect the proprietors of St. Domingo was prevented, by an order of the Abbé Gregoire and M. Brissot, who excited the municipality to disobedience before the orders of the minister could arrive. Thus M. Necker was stopped by the Jacobin club at d'Arcy sur Aube, when he left France in 1790; and in the same manner, every day, there were acts of opposition to the established government in different parts of the kingdom.

It would be very difficult to conceive any method of more effectually governing despotically a people under the appearance of liberty, than this; it is true, that there is no great depth of judgment necessary to see through it, and nothing is more certain, than that vast numbers of people did see through it; that even the lower class was not entirely deceived, but then it was too late; what remedy could be applied? the many-headed monster
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had swallowed up the monarchy, and covered the whole of France; and what could the opinion even of a majority of individuals do against it, when unconnected, and without any possibility of uniting? Before any party could obtain a sufficient degree of strength to make head against the Jacobins, they could easily be crushed, as, indeed, the moderates and the constitutionalists always were, for the Jacobins kept the correspondence and the place of meeting to themselves, and were by that infinitely removed from any danger from other clubs.

The government of the Jacobins was certainly strongest, when it acted in concert with the assembly, which it had, in general, the method of governing also, as we shall presently see; but in such cases as the assembly did not agree with the club, the latter had a great advantage, because the power of the assembly, till after the king was entirely dethroned in 1792, was obliged to have recourse to the circuitous mode already described of the minister, the departments, districts, and municipalities.

As long as there remained any regular form of government in France, under the king, the club was all powerful, and was out of the reach of any danger, except that of a revolt in Paris, to which sort of events, all governments, whether despotic
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or not, must be liable in a greater or less degree. The Jacobin club, it is true, lost a great part of its importance and power, when the king being dethroned, the assembly became a sort of club itself, and expedited its orders in the same prompt manner; it was then, indeed, a different case, and had not the principles of the assembly and of the Jacobins been the same, the club must have fallen sooner than it did. It ought here to be observed, that till the club had fairly brought the revolution to that pitch, that the assembly became a club, it did not lose either its power or importance; and when it did, it was rather a change of name than of nature that took place, for at present, the necessity of going on as they have begun, and of supporting measures so long adopted and applied, has rendered it unnecessary to continue, with all that energy and force that was indispensable in the first moments of the revolution.

Such then was the organization of the Jacobin club, which took its origin from Mirabeau, and its name from the convent of Jacobin monks, where the assemblies were held; and certainly whoever are its advocates in other nations, must either be the friends of despotism and anarchy joined together, or they must be totally ignorant of the real Jacobin government.

If there are any men who have been betrayed into an approbation of the revolution by the appearance of liberty and philanthropy, which an affectation of philosophy and virtue gave to the decrees of the first assembly; and who are unwilling to believe that France groaned under such a great degree of despotism as that which we have been describing, let them say whether they have found any of the decrees adhered to, except when it suited the general system of destruction and plunder. Individual liberty, and the protection of property, decreed by the assembly, and included in their famous rights of man, were they ever attended to? and yet they are essential to liberty and order in society.

Will the greatest friend of the revolution say, that it was entirely through ignorance that the constitution was so constructed, as neither to be capable of being executed, nor of affording force to protect itself? No, that would not pass; men who succeeded so well in most of their endeavours, could not be so weak. They calculated that it was impossible to be always representatives of the people, but they might always be members of the club; it was therefore their interest to have a feeble government, that they might have a powerful club, and the calculation had but one fault, which was, that in a state of confusion, such as they were creating, nothing could be permanent,
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every thing must be progressive, and that though the club was the chef d'œuvre of the revolution, both for permanence and for power, still it must partake of the nature of the foundation on which it was built.

The success with which the leaders of the French revolution found the work of anarchy go on, and the ease with which they governed all France, tyrannically, by means of the affiliation of their clubs, enabled them to make every apparent sacrifice of power to the good of the people. Supreme masters of France, the assembly seemed superior to every consideration that its own power and interest might inspire, and to attend to nothing but the will of the nation. To those who were at a distance, and did not know the double mechanism of the machine, justice, and a strict regard to the general good, might appear to be the only guides for their conduct. But the appearance of the thing is completely changed, when it is discovered that the assembly, and the laws which it made, were only the means employed to please, to delude, and to deceive. The most humane and just laws seemed to spring from the representatives of a great nation, and inspired confidence, and afforded a prospect of being free and happy. The difficulties left in the way of the execution of these laws, seemed an imperfection, but an imperfection that it was thought had

arisen from being too jealous of liberty and the rights of the people. The executive power which was the medium through which the people were to see those good and humane laws put in force, was enfeebled ; and it was thought, that through an excess of delicacy and philanthropy, the assembly had enervated even the power of doing good, lest it might be applied to do evil. So uncommon an appearance of moderation was very capable of leading those who observed it into an error, and from this the Jacobins aspired at the hope of establishing their government over the whole of Europe ; in every country of which they found they had converts and admirers.

It is certainly changing the appearance of things much, to draw the curtain aside, and shew their real motives, that their executive power was only as one of them said (*un hochet d'enfant*) a child's rattle, as were also their philosophical principles ; they were made to please and to amuse, while the true executive power lay in the Jacobin club, and its will constituted the law of the land.

It is no disgrace to strangers to have been mistaken as to the real state of things, because they only saw them from a distance ; but certainly it may be expected, that men who were led into an error by the false appearance of things, through a

love of liberty, will change their opinion when they know the real state of the matter. Every argument that can be used, and every fact that can be produced in the history of the government of France, will prove that the Jacobin government was such as we here represent it; and we may challenge the world to produce an instance wherein the laws and principles of the assembly triumphed, when put in opposition to the will of the club, during the first four years of the revolution.

That the club met with occasional contradiction from its own members, is true; a schism had arisen, but the club itself always obtained the victory, and drew down signal vengeance upon those who had dared so to oppose its will. When M. Bailly had withdrawn from the club, and as mayor of Paris wished to oppose the force of the law to its arbitrary will: he proclaimed martial law, and applied it to a disorderly mob. M. Bailly was not after that re-elected mayor of Paris; he soon lost his place, and, finally, was ignominiously put to death on the very spot where the law had been executed. The momentary triumph of M. Bailly far, then, from being any proof of the submission of the Jacobins to the law, is, on the contrary, a complete proof of their being superior to the law.

When any schism or division arose in the club, the members who retired immediately invoked the constitution, for they knew how much that and Jacobinism were at variance; this occasioned numerous inferior squabbles, and finally terminated in the revolution of the tenth of August, 1792, when the club triumphed over every thing that had the appearance of law.

The assembly had no sooner made a sort of coalition with the people who headed the Parisians, on the fourteenth of July, and the king returned to Versailles, than every possible measure was taken to destroy the ancient form of things; even the names, in many instances, were changed, and there were people who already talked in public places of the agrarian law.

The writings of Voltaire, Montesquiou, Raynal, Rousseau, and Mably, were ransacked for whatever was favourable to republicanism, inimical to injustice and to ill-founded prejudice; but these passages were taken only as it suited those who took them; they were changed, exaggerated, and then from the mouths of the orators of the assembly passed into those of the lowest rabble. The social contract, and other ingenious reveries, were made use of to lead people astray; for confusion and disorder could never be solidly founded, but upon wild notions instilled into the minds of those
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who were to be the instruments of the projected revolutions.

Monf. Mounier, a deputy from the province of Dauphiné, was one of the most eloquent and reasonable men of those who were tinctured with the new philosophy and love of change; of consequence, his project for the rights of man [Note C.] was adopted, as being the best. It was to serve as a basis for the new constitution, and all laws made were to be framed so as to correspond with it.

Amongst the articles of the rights of man, INSURRECTION was not only one, but it was ranked as a duty (*un devoir*;) and thereby the fatal principle was adopted of the perpetual right of the people to change their government at pleasure. M. Mounier soon found out his error, but still he found it out too late; and the very interesting account which he rendered of his conduct six months after, when he had been chased from the assembly, is one of those that throws the most light on the Jacobin transactions at the beginning of the revolution.

The principle of revolt is a very curious one, if we considered it when weighed against, *the will of the majority being the law of the whole*. In a small state like Athens, the majority might rise in

arms and change the government, because they found themselves all in one place, and could see which was the majority. A majority of the inhabitants of Paris might do the same; but then, a majority of Paris was but a small number in proportion to a majority of the kingdom, and in the moment of rebellion it never could be possible to know whether the revolt corresponded with the general will.

It has always been the practice of the Jacobins, like other sects that want to lead people into error, to make use of a sort of jargon that confounds the understanding, and, when new words were not invented, to apply old ones in an unusual way. The very name of insurrection implies the effort of the weaker against the stronger, or against the rulers placed over the insurgents by the will of the majority; the insurrection then must, from the nature of things, be totally incompatible with any sort of government whatever, as well as with the voice of the majority; for it is of no importance for nine-tenths of a nation to make laws, if the other tenth has a right to overturn them; which is not only the natural consequence of the principle, but has actually and literally taken place. Several insurrections in Paris have changed the whole system of law and government, at different times, during the revolution, and not one of them consisted of fifty thousand

thousand people. The insurrection of the tenth of August, which destroyed the constitution and the monarchy, did not amount to half the number, so that it was not at any rate one-hundredth part of the kingdom.

Those who decreed the principle of insurrection, might, perhaps, be ignorant of its consequences at the time; but they did not remain so long, they at first found means of turning it to their advantage, but at last, fell all of them sacrifices to it.

The moment that insurrection is to regulate a kingdom, the capital will become in the end the mistress of the whole; for, it is from the capital which the general movement alone can be given that sanctifies the insurrection. Thus we have seen every insurrection in Paris rendered sacred by the support given to it by the whole kingdom, while the insurrections of Lyons, and other towns, have drawn down upon their inhabitants the heaviest and most cruel vengeance.

By thus striking at the root of social order, the leaders of the revolution, perhaps, only meant to sanction what they had done; but, if so, they were doing what was unnecessary, for where strength and success are, no sanction is wanting, except what men receive from their own breasts; and that is not to be obtained by a creed of their own

own making. But, whatever their intention might be, it served completely the purpose of deluding the multitude, who did not stand much in need of such a stimulus, and who now no longer considered obedience of any kind but as a meanness and slavery.

It might naturally have been expected, that, when the deputies found themselves at leisure, they would consult their cahiers, that they might at least know the intentions of their constituents; but this they never did, nor talked of doing; and it is not without truth and justice that they have been accused of having revolted against their constituents, as well as against their king, and with still less reason, for the king had given them some cause, and, perhaps, even the plea of necessity might be urged; but they had no such plea with regard to their constituents.

The manner of resolving this question was too shallow to deceive any one; nevertheless it served the purpose amongst a people who talk a great deal, but seldom reflect seriously upon any thing. The reason that they gave, was, that if they had continued under the name and form of states general, they would have consulted their instructions, but, having become the National Assembly, that was not a necessary form. It was thus that Cromwell,

Cromwell, under the title of Protector, did what he could not have done under that of King.

If there can be any difference between two things where the essence remains the same, and where the end to be answered is the same, then this reasoning might have been good for something; but, let the name be changed as it might, the deputies were chosen by the people, and were intended to procure happiness for the people. Though the power which they had obtained by the victory over the court gave them the means of carrying their reforms something farther than their constituents had dared to expect, still that was no reason for not consulting their instructions; besides, as the change of name was their own act, and done without either the consent or knowledge of their constituents, the relation between elector and representative must either have remained entire, or it must have been destroyed altogether, as no act of one side only could change the original nature of the connection between them.

The intension, covered by the change of name, was seen through by most people at the time; it was considered as a means of diminishing their obedience to their king, and their duty to their constituents, and setting them above all those lays and formalities which existed with respect
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to the states general. Besides this, they dazzled the eyes of the multitude, whom they flattered, by taking to themselves the name of the nation; a national assembly seemed to be a name above every name; it seemed to comprehend powers of every sort by the appearance of national identity which it assumed. Had the name been changed after the revolt of the 14th of July, it might have been considered as a meer affair of necessity; but it was done before, and therefore done by choice: or after it had been changed, if the deputies had consulted their instructions, it would have been a proof, that they did not intend to set them aside: but no such thing was ever mentioned by them, so that the assembly might, in fact, be stiled a self-created one, as it preserved none of the marks of that body of representatives of the people, which were essential to their exercising legislative power. It was the Abbé Seyeyes who proposed changing the name: as he has since been the counsellor of Robespierre, and still chamber-counsel to the ruling party, his ambition is as evident as his want of moderation.

That the assembly established its right to legislate by its having force at its command is true, and that it was, therefore, as legitimate a government as that of most absolute thrones must be allowed; but when the members called themselves the representatives of a free people, were they saying true? No,

certainly ; to be such, another election and primary assemblies would have been necessary ; but it was very unnecessary for their ambition and private purposes, and therefore neither a new election, nor the duties which the old one imposed upon them, were ever thought of.

As it is just about this time, that the foundation of all the labyrinth of crimes and errors into which the people were led was firmly laid, it will be most conducive to order, to consider the different principles that led to them under different heads.

The foundations of the system of anarchy, pillage, and murder, were laid on the following principles :

1. That insurrection is one of the rights of man.
2. That the good of the public is the supreme law, before which all others are to give way.
3. That all men are born and remain equal in rights.
4. That men are never bound by what their ancestors have done ; this last is only a kind of repetition of the perpetual right of insurrection.

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We have already seen how incompatible the principle of insurrection is with the will of the majority, which never can be known at the time an insurrection takes place; and from this it arises, that as anarchy was what it was intended in the first instance to establish, the jarring of the principles amongst each other rendered them of a double utility. As every order of things establishes an inequality immediately, the third principle was at all times ready to set the two others at work.

The elements of discord and anarchy could not have been better chosen, and perhaps, in future times, it will be considered as a discovery equal to that of original colours; for let anarchy assume what shape it may, its origin will be found in one or more of these principles.

The first principle legitimates resistance to the law, whenever those who resist shall have the means of employing force, and obliging their fellow citizens to follow their example, where this is the general practice, a perpetual state of warfare and revolution must be the inevitable consequence.

Perhaps, amongst a people like the inhabitants of North America, the same principles might not lead to such fatal consequences, because there the
people,

people, both by their situation as individuals, and their habits of life, would be led to make a different use of such rights. In a country where every man is either a proprietor, or has the prospect of becoming one by regular industry, property must naturally be respected, and industry considered as the surest road to obtain it, but in an old vitiated state of society, where fortunes were become very unequal, where nine-tenths were not proprietors, and had very little prospect of ever becoming so, it was absolutely necessary to consider of some manner of securing the peaceable inhabitant from the attack of that part of society, who having nothing to lose, consider the whole world as a fishing pond, in which they are to fish as well as they can, and who compose the majority at an insurrection, though common sense would revolt at their being admitted into a deliberating assembly, to become there the majority.

The *unlimited* liberty of the press was also the consequence of these principles; so that sedition, treason, and every kind of calumny, became quite common, and rendered it equally impossible to live peaceably in society, or to administer justice and regulate public affairs.

Every man who chose to do so, set to work with denunciations and scandal, and did society thereby a great deal of mischief; mistrust and suspicion

suspicion reigned, peaceable men, tired of a contest where the anonymous villain had the advantage, or afraid to shew himself as a mark for their arrows, withdrew from public affairs, which were by degrees left to the care of the abandoned and the desperate.

In speaking of the evils which might naturally be expected to arise from these principles, when applied to the government of such a large and corrupted nation, we do not by any means go beyond, nor even approach the miserable state to which they have since reduced that country; it is even astonishing, that they have been carried to such lengths as we have since seen, because the poorest individual has lost by the bargain. The maximum of personal enjoyment is now reduced below what formerly might be called the minimum; that is to say, the general run of people are worse in their situation, than the poorest class of working labourers was before the revolution.

The members of the first assembly have said in their own vindication, that though they at first laid down, unlimitedly, the principles of things, they afterwards fixed rules and bounds for their application; as if a decree regulating the form of an insurrection was not an insult upon common sense. Why did not the philosophers of 1789
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decree laws for the form of the waves of the ocean, or assign bounds for the flames of the fire, for they are all equally capable of being directed. When the storm does not agitate, the wave ceases to rage, and the flames are regulated by the elements which surround them, and the food which they feed upon: a mob in insurrection has likewise its regulator, which is composed of its will and its power; where they correspond, the insurrection must go on, where they do not, it must stop; and thus we have seen the apostles of the system of which we speak fall alternately sacrifices to the principle of insurrection; we have seen them torn in pieces by those very men whose passions they had stirred up, and thereby taught, from sad experience, to know, that their tardy laws to regulate calumny and insurrection, and to explain away their original definition of equality, was of little use. They administered the poison, and let it operate long before they applied a feeble antidote, which could not have prevented the effect of its operation, even if it had been sooner resorted to, but which, when thought of too late, betrayed either a want of judgment or a bad intention.

We might attribute naturally, and it would be most agreeable to us to do so, to an ignorance of the consequences that would arise, the throwing out a general principle in an unlimited sense, and leaving a long interval before any at-

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tempt was made to set bounds to its application; but there are several reasons which shew that it was done with design and not through ignorance. First of all, it has been the constant practice of the assembly; secondly, the aristocratic party generally warned them of the danger of doing so; and, lastly, in such cases as it suited their own purposes, we have always seen that they were not ignorant, but very acute in their examination of the probable consequences of things; it would, therefore, be wrong to impute this to ignorance; however, if there can be any doubt on the subject, that doubt is fully resolved by themselves on different occasions since. They have never dared to speak against the holy insurrection; but Condorcet, Brissot, and others, both in their speeches and writings, have signified, that insurrection might last too long, that it might at last aliment itself with what was precious instead of what required to be destroyed; and such jargon as this, from which nothing can be understood, but that they disapproved of insurrection, in a general sense, as much as any of us do, but that they made use of it when it answered their own purpose.

There is an absurdity so conspicuously great in consecrating, as a general principle, that which *may* endure too long, that it is astonishing there yet exist men who have any other sentiments than those either of horror or of pity, for those persons

persons who could lead a nation into such a labyrinth of error.

When the people of Paris had got the better of their fears, then the sixty sections, which were so useful in the moment of danger, became the seats of every sort of abuse that men could practise, under the appearance of justice and the public good.

Each section became a tumultuous assembly, and had its orators, its president, and secretaries, exactly after the manner of the National Assembly. Decrees were made in the same style and spirit, and there was very little difference except in the extent of dominion between the Sectional Assembly and the National Assembly.

Although in any one section there could not be any thing very important to do, yet the assemblies were almost perpetual; under the cover of giving advice or opinion, or of consulting with each other, they examined every question; and, whenever it suited their purpose, those opinions were printed and placarded: so that with sixty public assemblies debating, writing, publishing, and putting in force the new ideas of legislation, the minds of all the people were heated to a degree, almost past bearing. The consequence was, that plots of every kind were imagined, and

oppression of every kind was put in practice; there was no rest by night nor by day, and the most cruel tyranny that is exercised in any civilised nation would have been a state of happiness, in comparison to what the Parisian began already to feel.

Novelty, which has great influence in Paris, and hope, which luckily comes to alleviate the pains of men on most occasions, rendered the citizen content; but, above all, the *amour propre*, was gratified by thinking himself free, and wearing an uniform. Thus it is, that what is difficult and dangerous becomes often more sufferable than it would otherwise be, and at last necessity of continuing, added to the habit of bearing, supports us for a long series of years under circumstances which would, without these alleviations, have become intolerable.

CHAP. VI.

The national assembly leads the people astray—Berthier and Foulon massacred inhumanly by the mob—the cool ferocity of the assembly, of La Fayette, and of Bailly the mayor of Paris—Women are pushed foremost in all cases of insurrection—Castles of the nobles burned, and the country people stirred up—Many newspapers established to preach rebellion—M. Necker's return; he loses some of his popularity—Question of two chambers debated—The 4th of August, and feudal system pulled down—Immediate evil consequences—General anarchy, discontent, and misery—The assembly contradicts M. Necker—A loan made—Mirabeau declaims against paper money—Necessity of a change both for the court and the assembly—A revolt and massacre in the 4th and 5th October—The king brought prisoner to Paris—The Assembly follows.

WHILE the members of the national assembly were neglecting to consult the instructions given by their constituents, they were every day employed in making harangues, which, by conveying an unlimited principle of liberty to the people, was, in fact, stirring up nothing but anarchy and licentiousness.

The end of the present century, so much boasted of for its superior knowledge, has not, however, the merit of the discovery, that it is only the vice of mankind that renders laws necessary, or that renders a compact between men necessary; if all were perfectly virtuous, it would follow, that all would be perfectly just and happy, and that the system of liberty and equality, as the French call it, might be put in practice. When we have quarries of diamonds we may build oriental palaces, but while we have but brick and mortar, we must content ourselves with European architecture.

National vengeance and national justice were words that the people used upon all occasions, with just the same attention to their application as the parrot from his cage. The mob had scarcely got time to rest from the exertion of walking into the Bastille, when the door was opened, and massacring a few old men, before a new occasion offered itself for exerting a patriotic vengeance.

Amongst those persons who had accepted of a place in the new ministerial arrangements, when M. Necker was dismissed, was M. Foulon, a man very rich, but by no means popular, and who, besides, was father-in-law to the intendant of Paris, M. Berthier. This M. Foulon, instead
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of quitting France, retired only to a little distance from Paris, and concealed himself on his own estate, where he was discovered, and brought from thence to Paris. The good people had heard say, that this man had expressed a wish to make them eat grass; it was considered as a piece of pleasantry and cruelty, that united to satisfy the justice of the people, to fill his mouth with grass, and putting a bundle of hay on his back, to make him walk about twenty miles in the heat of the day in the month of July. No particular crime was laid to his charge, though he was not by any means a man without fault; on the contrary, rich, vain, and selfish, he could have few friends; but he had never said what was imputed to him, nor was he accused of any act of oppression. He was first carried to the Hotel de Ville, and from thence sent by M. de la Fayette, who commanded the national troops, under a feeble escort to prison. But there were men amongst the crowd, whose purpose was to prevent his arriving there; Foulon was taken by force from the soldier citizens, hanged, and his head cut off. This was all but the affair of a few minutes, his head (the mouth stuffed with hay) was carried in triumph on a pike, and the naked body drawn in a mutilated state, with all the indecency that it was possible, through the streets. A number of furies, in the form of women, dancing round as it went along, and with

words and gestures, which do not admit of a repetition, endeavouring to degrade a lifeless corpse.

Berthier, the intendant of Paris, was coming to town prisoner the same day, under an escort of an immense number of troops, and it was considered by the mob as a pleasant piece of sport to carry the head of the father-in-law and throw it at the son.

Berthier arrived about ten in the evening, the same mob still attending to put him to death. It had even been advised by numbers amongst them to put him to death before he should enter the town-house; this, however, was difficult to do, for there were more than twenty thousand of the national guards there and in the adjoining avenues, so that the mob had, in fact, been obliged to give up part of the ground to the guards. The General la Fayette, with all the cool deliberation of a philosophical and republican hero, settled all these difficulties; about five hours before, he had seen the miserable end of Foulon, whom he had sent to prison in broad day, yet he sent Berthier in the night to prison, with a small guard only, and with orders to that guard *to do no violence to the people*. The consequence was, that the miserable victim had scarcely descended the stairs when he was seized and hung up at the same lamp-

lamp-iron, but the rope breaking, it was thought the quickest method to cut open his body with a sabre, and in less than eight minutes from his leaving the council chamber, one of the mob appeared before Bailly and la Fayette, and all the deputies of the sections, with the victim's heart reeking in his hand.

Such was the commencement of the reign of liberty and justice, such was the beginning of the administration of M. Bailly as mayor, and M. de la Fayette as commander; with such a people, such a mayor, and such a commander, it was not to be wondered if the human character grew worse, and if peaceable men began to wish to be out of the kingdom.

An assembly that had seen such transactions, ought to have been quick to punish, and searched out with severity the authors and perpetrators of those horrid and disgraceful actions. But what did they do? they permitted Barnave to preserve his place and consideration amongst them, though he answered to a member who lamented such atrocities, "What, then, and was the blood that was spilt so pure!" This Barnave should have been chased as a monster from an assembly that pretended to be the fathers of the people; on the contrary, his reputation and importance in the assembly increased, [Note F.] and the people find-
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ing advocates amongst the rulers, and no where any one to punish, was prepared whenever there was occasion to repeat the same. There was no excuse in this affair, as on the first day of the revolution, when they thought they had run great risks, when they were heated with exertion, and not quite relieved from fear; [Note G.] it was a cool, deliberate act, and most assuredly a very barbarous one.

It was upon this occasion the mob discovered, that as the national guards were, in case of insurrection, to be their antagonists, the best way would be to make the women go foremost. This they long practised, and generally with perfect success; for besides that, the market and fish-women of Paris are generally full as stout as the men, they were bolder, more daring, and more cruel; to this they added the advantage of the guards not caring to use violence with them; so that if M. de la Fayette sanctified insurrection, the people did it every justice in the execution.

To prevent the nobles from exerting their interest in the countries which were not accessible to affiliated clubs and writings, in the same manner as towns, it was rumoured that the nobility were plotting a *contre revolution*. This word was invented for the purpose, and *the people* was invited to burn their

their castles, and maltreat their persons, by letters sent to different quarters of the kingdom, signifying that the castles were the repairs and strongholds of aristocrats, from which they would some day or other issue out and massacre the defenceless inhabitants of all the villages.*

* Amongst many tragical scenes which the burning of castles occasioned, one pleasant enough occurred in the province of Dauphiny; the master of a castle being informed that the inhabitants of a neighbouring village were coming to burn his house, assembled all his friends and dependents as quickly as possible, and informed them of the business; but, says he, defence will be useless, for other villages will join themselves to that, and they will finish with murdering us all; let us set off to burn their village. Off they set, and the two parties met on the road, when the following conversation took place.

People of the village. Well, Sir, you're setting off, we see; do you know that we are going to burn your castle?

Master of the castle. So, so, that's very well, for we are just on the road to burn your village. But whose orders have you to burn my castle; are you properly authorised?

Village. We act by the orders of the king and the national assembly for the public good.

Castle. That's perfectly right, nothing is more just, I do the same, don't let us lose time, let each obey.

The chief of the village (after a little pause, in a low voice.) But what do you think of this affair, would it not be better for us both not to obey? we shall not burn your castle, and you will not burn our village?

Castle. Well, if you think so, I agree, let us each return home. Thus ended the expedition.

The people never could be led to these excesses but by inspiring into them fear, which has been the principal agent of the Jacobins. They knew well that under the influence of fear, men act more than they reflect or calculate, and that fear, with few exceptions, operates on all; whereas hope reflects and calculates, and does not operate so universally. Besides this, fear is the passion which inspires cruelty more than any other, the Jacobins therefore invoked fear, and employed it from the beginning till the present day; it has continually augmented till the reign of Robespierre, when it arrived at its greatest possible pitch, it was then called the system of terror. The revolution, however, has only varied in the quantities it employed of the same thing, for it has been from the beginning spurred on by fear, conducted by fear, and continued by fear.

The old government was no sooner deprived of all power, than a number of small daily newspapers appeared, some few of them only giving the debates of the assembly, and a little news; others giving news, reasonings of their own, and embracing whatever a newspaper may be supposed to contain. Three of those papers only deserve at present to be mentioned, that of the famous Brissot, called the French Patriot; another by Camille de Moulins, every week, entitled the Revolutions of France and Brabant; and the last
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the journal of Marat, called the Friend of the People. Of these the journal of Brissot was the most moderate ; it contained sometimes good remarks, and though it laid down in their fullest latitude the principles of insurrection, of equality, and the fashionable phrases of the people's good, and the people's will, he never directly advised murder nor robbery. Camille de Moulins, on the contrary, began by pointing out its victims to the people, and obtained from Mirabeau, who did not blush to treat him as his friend, the title of purveyor-general for the lantern. Marat, superlative in wickedness at the beginning, as he was at the end, preached nothing but massacre and destruction. Those three publications, at a cheap price, were circulated through the kingdom, and having different degrees of atrocity, suited different characters. The fate of their authors is a true picture of the progress and manner in which their principles gained ground. Brissot's principles at the end of two years were in the mode, and continued so a long time ; at last he fell, and then Marat and Camille de Moulins got more into vogue than ever Brissot had been, though at first they were objects of hatred and of horror.

The return of M. Necker on the 29th of July, was a signal for general rejoicing, and Necker, who went to the town-house in triumph, thought
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to have completed his glory by proposing a general amnesty for all that was past. He harangued the common council, and brought them to consent to his proposition; but he was scarcely departed, when the sixty governments of Paris assembled, declared the common council had exceeded its powers, and revoked all. Thus was the last day of M. Necker's glory come; he was the first who felt the effects of the insurrection upon himself, of all those who had worked it up.

The same man to whose will the nation had hitherto given a blind obedience, was now contradicted in the most open and least ceremonious manner, and his fortune, like that of the great Pompey, took a decided turn. Till that day, every thing had prospered with him, and from that moment he never had any thing but disappointment and defeat in all his projects.

The national assembly was employing itself in debates concerning the new constitution that was to be made. It took an odd enough turn, and we must naturally suppose with an intention to spread general principles, by treating general questions, and to complete the triumph of the people by opposing their will and interest to that of the king and the nobles. The question of whether the assembly should, as in England, be composed of two chambers, or only of one, was debated,

bated, but probably never seriously, by the greater number of members who were decidedly in favour of one general assembly. The veto of the king, or his power of sanctioning, or refusing his sanction to any law, was also already mentioned; and all these discussions gave occasion to principles which led people to think that king, nobles, and commons were absolutely opposite to each other in their interests; so that no method of rendering the two former obnoxious to the general bulk of the nation could be better calculated, or for spreading discontents and jealousies.

It was during these debates that whatever was wrong or ridiculous in the ancient feudal system was held up to the public in the most exaggerated language. Some privileges which inspire horror, but which were never used, and only existed in some particular places,* were considered, or ra-

* One of these was, that the Seigneur returning from hunting, had a right to kill one of his vassals, by cutting him open, that he might soak his feet in his bowels, to refresh himself. The relation is shocking, and the fact is true, but the general feudal system had no connection with it. Another was, that when a Seigneur found himself seriously offended by a vassal, he had a right to use the privilege of a husband with the vassal's wife, while the husband was shut into a strong wooden chest, upon the top of which his wife suffered violence. Another was the more generally known privilege of the Seigneur, called *le droit de Seigneur*, to consummate in person the marriage of his vassals. All of these are so repugnant to justice and common sense, that they could not occasion the least uneasiness to any person in the present enlightened times.

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ther affected to be considered, as dangerous to liberty; and served, however, to turn the general tide still more strongly against the whole of the feudal system than it already was.

One of the evils of having but one chamber is evidently the facility with which a decree may be passed before it has been maturely weighed. This evil is particularly great in France, amongst so impatient and lively a people, and where they are so susceptible of that enthusiasm which pervades men in popular assemblies upon the discussion of important subjects. The National Assembly was regulated by no ancient form, nor by any new law, respecting the manner of passing a decree; so that the feeling of the moment operated without restraint; and as their sittings were almost incessant, being held from nine or ten in the morning till three in the afternoon, and from about half-past four in the afternoon till ten or eleven at night, the members got into a heated state both of mind and body, that was extremely unfriendly to calm deliberation.

It was proposed to begin the work of forming a constitution; but M. de Noailles, a nobleman in the party of la Fayette, proposed beginning by sacrificing the feudal rights of the nobles to the general interests. This was proposed in one of the evening sittings, and is a better

ter example of the danger of one chamber without any counterpoise, than any thing that can possibly be said upon the subject. The rights of hunting, fishing, of having deer parks, rabbit warrens, and pigeon-houses, were done away along with the other more unnatural and more unjust of the feudal privileges. The nobles strove which should be foremost in abandoning their rights, and the enthusiasm became general; the parish priests, imitating their example, offered to throw up their perquisites, and those of the clergy who had a plurality of livings, offered in a voluntary manner to confine themselves to one only. Many particular privileges, which were enjoyed only in certain places and towns, and, in particular in what was called the Pays d'Etat, were given up by the representatives from those places. This enriched vastly the scene, and rendered it extremely interesting.

The mixture of good and evil in this night's labours was astonishingly great. No one who contemplates it with the feelings of a man, can refuse his approbation in a general view of the matter. It was the result of feeling and of a sentiment of justice which got the better of prejudice and personal interest, though as to the manner in which it was done, prudence was left totally behind. Whenever the open and generous feelings obtain a victory over the calculating selfish ones,

it is a victory that exalts human nature, and sets criticism at a distance : and, certainly, though the consequences resulting from this night of the memorable fourth of August have been terrible to the human race ; though the manner in which these generous sacrifices operated upon those on whom the favours were conferred is disgraceful to mankind, it is impossible entirely to withhold approbation and applause from such a contest of generosity and disinterestedness as that scene exhibited.

In one night the ancient and Gothic fabric of feudal rights was destroyed throughout the largest kingdom in Europe ; and that system of destruction and invasion of property was begun, which has known no other bounds, but that which nature has assigned to the most terrible of its scourges. Pestilence itself ceases when there is nothing more to destroy, and the invasion of property only ceased in France, when there was no more property to invade.

The enthusiasm with which the feudal rights were destroyed on that memorable night, only served as a signal for destroying the small remains of order and subordination which remained in the kingdom. The people had already begun in some parts to burn the castles of the Seigneurs, they now begun every where to destroy and rebel. If men through philanthropy have ever wished to
annihilate

annihilate the rights of hunting and fishing, this decree, and its immediate consequences, may, perhaps, change their opinion. The whole peasantry of France turned itself loose upon the birds and beasts—partridges and pheasants were for some time cheaper than fowls from the barn yard, and other game was in as great plenty as butcher's meat. The people had risen in a mass for the first time upon the timid race of animals, which were exterminated in a few months. The pleasures of the chase, hitherto confined to a few, were now entirely put an end to. The inhabitants of the rivers escaped this general destruction, because it requires patience, industry or art, to destroy them, and the destroyers possessed neither of the three. Let us hope that the efforts of the same armed banditti, as long as the destruction of order is their aim, will at least be baffled by that same element, and that the sea will at last set bounds to the victories of those immense armies, which, like the locusts in Egypt, conquer and destroy merely by their numbers: or let us hope, that in the end they will turn against themselves, for nature has fixed a bound to the destroying principle by making it attack itself.

A modification of the hasty decrees of the fourth of August, regulating the manner of redeeming the tythes of the clergy, and the feudal

rights that were of a valuable nature, only served to augment the mischief. Emissaries were heard in all places haranguing against that many-headed monster which they called the Aristocracy, and which they said was going to revive. The generous manner in which the first sacrifices were made now lost all its value with the receivers of the benefit, as imprudent generosity always does. The nobles and the people became open enemies; the burning of castles and title deeds became an amusement, which the leaders of the clubs and the orators of the assembly encouraged by their words and actions.

In France, where they had been always accustomed to the terms of Good God and the Holy Church, and where, in general, every thing is good or bad in the extreme degree, the name of the people was seldom pronounced without being preceded by the adjective Good, as that of the king, priests, and nobles, was by some a title either of reproach or contempt.

Those practices were begun in Paris, but imitated all over the extent of the kingdom with a rapidity and exactness that nothing less than the affiliation of the clubs could have given rise to; those who are any way acquainted with the manner in which uninstructed, as well as young minds, are acted upon, know that epithets of
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approbation or reproach, artfully and constantly applied, are the most capable of destroying old prejudices or creating new.

It will be difficult for posterity to believe to what a ridiculous length the enthusiasm was carried, for it will never be credited, that the obedience of the child to the father was affected to be traced to the feudal system; and thus one of the most sacred bonds of the human race was loosened, and that for the first time; hitherto, by polished and by savage nations, by the Christian and the infidel, the sacred rights of a father had never been disputed. The philosophy and knowledge of the eighteenth century had made a new discovery, and unluckily the state of society was sufficiently depraved to reduce it to practice.*

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* In the Lyceum, an institution of a very respectable nature in Paris, to which people were admitted for an annual subscription of four louis d'ors, the democratic spirit broke out in all its extravagance. We are not, said they, to read such books and periodical works, and hear such lectures as the proprietors of the establishment think proper. We must no longer submit to such a ridiculous despotism: let every thing be put to the vote amongst us, the subscribers, and then it will be well. An Englishman who was a member, observed in vain to them, that the proprietors had the undoubted and exclusive right of preserving the institution as they pleased, provided they did not make it worse during the course of the year; that this was not forcing them to read nor hear such and such productions, such were offered to them before they subscribed, and they could not complain.

The opposition which the execution of these decrees met with from some of the nobles only increased the mischief; and, as the ordinary course of industry was stopped, (for nobody thought of building, planting, or improving, in a country a prey to disorder) the licentious and idle formed themselves into regular bands, for the purpose of burning and plundering, without paying any attention to whom the property belonged.

The decrees of the assembly to prevent these excesses only increased them, for the assembly had no power to put any orders in force. The assembly had no executive power but through the the medium of the king and his ministers, whom they had set the example of disobeying and ill-treating; so that to expect obedience to themselves

Debates and cabals went so far, that the philosophical proprietors of the establishment finished by giving it all up at an inconsiderable price to the subscribers, who literally, by noise and democratic bustle, became masters of the field. On many of the public roads the passengers stopped the diligence in order to sleep all night, when they pleased; and what was more, proved to the magistrates of the towns where they stopped, that, as they paid, there was no reason why they should submit to the arbitrary orders of a conductor, who was, in fact, their servant. It was the people, a part of the nation, that was in the diligence, and the constituted authority was glad, as well as inclined, to decide in favour of the nation against the poor humiliated public functionary, who conducted this unruly portion of the sovereign. This sort of jargon is the only one applicable to the description of the confusion of names and things that was going on.

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was not only ridiculous but unfair. Though we cannot see without displeasure, as well as censure, the unruly and unprincipled conduct of the people, yet we must see that of the instigators with feelings of the same sort still more strong. The people have been, are, and always will be, subservient to the will and views of those who have the art to manage them, by gratifying their passions: incapable of any regular combination or unanimity of themselves, they must be guided by some general motives. The assembly had power enough with the people when they chose to decree any thing that corresponded with their wishes, but whatever did not, was, as at the time we are speaking of, always left without force.

With one hand the assembly set the people loose effectually, and with the other they shewed their desire to regulate their course by what might have the appearance of wisdom and moderation. It was by such conduct that, while they served the cause of disorder at home, they persuaded people in other nations that they were regulated by justice and sound principles of morality. This judgment may to some people seem harsh, and it is proper to support it with some reasons.

First of all, the constituent assembly continually persevered in the same plan of destroying old laws before they made new ones, by that means

leaving a sort of interregnum in law, which could not but breed disorder. Again, that confusion of those empty, unjust, or ridiculous feudal rights which demanded a total abolition, with those which, being matters of real property, required a compensation, could not have arisen from ignorance, it must have been done with intention. The constituent assembly was by no means composed of ignorant men, and their readiness and acuteness at comprehending was remarkably great; it could not then be from ignorance, particularly as the oppressive and useful parts of the feudal system was not a new subject of discussion, but had been discussed at different times, and in different countries; besides, it only required common sense and a feeling of common justice to see that the whole was not capable of being comprehended under one general principle; it is, therefore, very certain that the National Assembly did not do so. As a still further argument, we may certainly be allowed to quote the future conduct of the same men; did not they proscribe the order of the nobles in less than one twelvemonth after? Did not they, likewise, lay violent hands upon the whole of the revenues of the church? and has not the famous Abbé Seyeyes, who assisted on the fourth of August—who assisted Brissot, Danton, and Robespierre, and who is still a leading man—did not he calmly say with all the cruel *sans froid* of an executioner, when
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they were speaking of destroying nobility, "Destroy nobility," says he, "that's impossible, you must exterminate the nobles." All those reasons give a great appearance of probability to the intention which we have alledged; and though they will weigh more or less with people, according to the eyes with which they view the consequences which have resulted, yet to such as have had an opportunity of examining minutely the character and conduct of the leading men in that assembly, no doubts will remain.

The king sanctioned this decree with readiness, as was to be expected. Under the lash of a democratic assembly, in danger from a democratic mob, and aided by the councils of a democratic minister, he could not do otherwise.

"France, at this time," says Rabaut de St. Etienne, (who wrote the history of the first period of the revolution) "might have been likened to an immense chaos; power was suspended, authority disowned, and the wrecks of the feudal system were added to the vast ruins. And every thing tended to excite an apprehension, that the kingdom would become a prey to anarchy." So much for the admission of the disorders introduced by one of the members of the convention, who was long one of the leading men. "But," continues he, "a people which
"hath

“ hath grown old in the habitude of order feels
“ the want of it, and cannot long dispense with
“ it. The proprietors were all in arms, and this
“ proved the salvation of France ; for that class
“ of men who have nothing to lose, and every
“ thing to gain in a revolution, was restrained
“ from assembling any where through the fear of
“ a repulse.”*

* See page 130 of Rabaut's History of the Revolution of France, translated by James Whyte, Esq. published for Debrett, Piccadilly. Rabaut was the son of a well-known and much-respected Protestant clergyman at Nismes, in the south of France, of the name of Paul Rabaut. The son was by no means without merit and abilities, and as he had been often obliged to preach, like John the Baptist, in the desert, to an oppressed body of industrious, honest, and loyal subjects, he naturally must have felt strongly for the oppressions exercised in former times ; he was, therefore, more to be excused than any other of those who went headlong into the revolution. Monsieur Rabaut, in aiding to humiliate the Church of Rome, could not be accused of apostacy, however he might be suspected of being actuated by vengeance. He abandoned the Jacobins during the second assembly, and made, for a time, one of what was called the moderate party ; but, on the triumph of the Jacobins on the 10th of August, he joined them again, which is a severe reproach, as it shewed the strength of a party weighed more with him than their principles. When Brissot fell, Rabaut was condemned as a fugitive ; he was taken and executed, and his wife, who had contributed not a little, it is said, to the violent conduct of her husband, put an end to her own existence. Such are the effects of revolutions upon those who otherwise would have been happy and virtuous !

M. Ra-

M. Rabaut avows the existence of anarchy, but denies its consequences; and he shews us also, that even democratic leaders expect the preservation of order only from the exertion of proprietors who are interested in it, and who dread disorder from those, who having nothing to lose expect to profit by confusion. Truth, extorted from one of their leaders, this confession of faith, which but ill suited a man who constantly acted with the Jacobin society, whose principles were so different; but Rabaut was ambitious and vindictive; he had purposes to serve and passions to gratify, and therefore did not act as he thought. With respect to his opinion, that France was saved, and order restored, his own miserable end, and that both of his first and his last associates in the revolution, are proofs to the contrary.*

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* As M. Rabaut's History contains some good things, and the reputation of the writer, as well as the circumstance of his being an actor himself, will naturally give it considerable weight with people, it is but well to observe, that of every political event, such as the taking the Bastile, the 5th of October, &c. he gives what may be stiled the most vulgar version. He gives it just as it was publicly spread abroad at the time; now the truth never was known at the moment. It is inconceivable how a man of talents, and of industry, could be at such little pains; and it is more than probable, that he wrote with some particular design. As an example, he says, after the 5th of October the Duke of Orleans, with M. de la Fayette, prevailed upon the king to grant

As the assembly had not yet got full possession of the executive power, for M. Necker was not prepared to follow them in all their mad projects, it was very desirable to reduce him by necessity to yield at discretion. No money had been obtained by any thing that the states general had done, and therefore money was as much wanting as ever. M. Necker proposed making a small loan of thirty millions at five per cent. The assembly, though the loan was to be without security, though credit, both public and private, was at an end, and money could not be obtained at eight or even ten per cent. thought proper to reduce the interest offered to four and a half per cent. Six per cent. was the common rate of interest in France; this reduction must either be looked upon as a whim, as an insult to M. Necker, or as a means of depriving the court of the money, or,

grant him a commission to the court of London. Now, in the first place, M. d'Orleans had no commission to the court of London, and returned without leave to France nine months after. Secondly, La Fayette was become his mortal enemy. And, lastly, the trial instituted at the court of the Chatelet proved to every unprejudiced man, that the duke was a principal leader in the affair of the 5th of October. Rabaut might entertain what opinion he pleased, but why does he pass over these facts? An artful historian may give a false colouring sometimes, but it is in vain to attempt concealing what is publicly known. Rabaut just gives it as it was believed among the people at the time, for soon after even the lowest rabble thought the duke guilty in that affair.

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perhaps, a combination of all these reasons together : it is most probable, that the real intention was to disgust M. Necker, and throw the court entirely into their hands ; for the court enjoyed some degree of public confidence in matters of finance as long as M. Necker should continue to administer them. We shall see many things that will confirm us in the belief, that this plan did actually exist.

This loan had no success ; M. Necker was not accustomed to meet with such treatment, nor prepared tamely to bear it. He remonstrated, and having truth and justice on his side, threw the blame unanswerably on the assembly.

Another loan, of eighty millions, was proposed, with the intention, however, of only realizing forty, as, according to a method often practised in France, but which gave rise to much stock-jobbing, one-half was received from the subscribers in government paper already issued, and funded at a lower interest. This second loan had better but not entire success ; and it was soon perceived, that as M. Necker was no longer the conductor, as the king was no longer king, as the levying of taxes was become precarious, and the assembly neither seemed to understand finance ; nor be governed by any fixed principles, loans would not do any longer, and that some other
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mode must be adopted, was not so much the talk of the assembly as of the whole nation.

Paper money, as it was then called, seemed to be the only resource; but Mirabeau in the assembly, speaking of that, expressed himself with his usual energy, saying, that paper money was an impost levied by the point of the bayonet, (*c'étoit un impôt fait le sabre à la main*) that it was contrary to the rights of men which they were establishing, and that it was the greatest act of despotism of which the rulers of a nation could be guilty.

If at that time the court could have been fully supplied with money, the assembly run a very considerable risk. M. Necker was no longer its friend, but was become that of his master. He had resources for raising money while the assembly had none; and as he still enjoyed a portion of his former popularity, he was to be considered as a dangerous man. There is not, indeed, a doubt, but that M. Necker, whose aim in all that he had done was to gratify his own ambition, and who thought to rule the assembly, finding himself reduced to a state of insignificance, would have been very ready to join in any safe plan to arrange matters upon the old footing.

Mirabeau, with ambition and hardness for undertaking any thing, and capable of executing a
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great deal, was pushed on by his friend and counsellor Claviere, who had an unconquerable aversion to his countryman M. Necker ; so that there was on all hands reason for the one party to hate and mistrust the other. To prevent the court from having any effectual supply of money was the only probable method of gaining the victory for the party of Mirabeau, and therefore to deny the only resource was the best means.

Nevertheless, the misery and discontent of the people was extreme ; no money was issued from the royal treasury to pay the renters in Paris who lived on the interest of money lent to the state ; in return, they could not pay any body, the distress became general, and was prodigiously augmented by the want of grain, which had now increased to a greater pitch than ever. The discredit which the paper of the *caisse d'escompte* had fallen into, in consequence of the discovery, that that company had lent a greater sum than all its original capital to government, augmented the evil, by decreasing the quantity of the circulating medium.

It was during this, that the party of Orleans is suspected, by the sudden death of a money-broker, whose bankruptcy amounted to above fifty-five French millions, and who was found laying with his brains blown out in the middle of a wood,

wood, to have procured a large supply of money, which enabled the intrigues to go on with considerable spirit,* and prepared the way for a complete triumph over the court.

* M. Pinet was found in the Bois de Boulogne, with his brains blown out with a pistol; it was reported every where immediately that he had shot himself; but the story, never before published, of which, however, the proofs are in the hands of some of his creditors, is too curious in itself, and too interesting, as shewing to what lengths the Duke carried his villainy, to be omitted. After the revolt in July, when the Bastille was taken, it was a general opinion in Paris that the mob would pillage the bankers and rich money-brokers. Pinet, who was known to have large transactions, was the agent de change of d'Orleans, and for security delivered to him his strong box, containing in notes and other value, for about twenty-two millions. The Duke gave him a receipt for the strong box, and when the end of the month arrived, peace being a little restored to the capital, and the monthly payments coming round, he demanded the strong box. The Duke told him he had sent the whole to a country house, which he had at Passy, on the side of the Bois de Boulogne, invited Pinet to come and dine with him, and bring the receipt which he had given him, and the strong box should be delivered. The poor unsuspecting banker came and dined with the Duke, who contrived to persuade him to be conducted by one of his servants in a cabriolet across the wood; this he consented to, having an intention of going to his father-in-law, who lived at St. Germain. He was found two days after in that wood, with a pistol shot that had entered his *head from behind*, and the contents of his strong box, as well as the box itself, were never heard of. That this should actually happen, and no body dare to complain, is not surprising; it would have cost very little trouble to the Duke, and not a single reflection, to have destroyed whoever had ventured to unveil the mystery. [*For the rest of this, see note H at the end.*]

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From the necessity on one hand of procuring money to go on with the expenses of the state, which was felt by the assembly itself as well as the court; and, on the other hand, the danger of allowing M. Necker and the court to be in possession of a full treasury, it was determined to give the kingly power a deadly blow in time, so as to have nothing in future to fear. This, however, could only be done by getting possession of the king's person, or by putting him to death, and placing another on the throne, who should be in the true spirit of the revolution. (*See Note I.*)

An insurrection was necessary for either of these purposes. Those who wish for complete information on that affair, should consult the letter published by M. Mounier, who was president of the assembly when the insurrection happened, from which, as well as the trial instituted against the Duke of Orleans, it appears beyond a doubt that the plan was laid and executed by his party; that it failed as to the taking away the life of the king and his family, but that the plan was artfully changed to that of getting possession of his person. It would require a large portion of a volume to enter completely upon this subject; which would be totally inconsistent with the plan of this work, at the same time that it is impossible to pass over slightly so material an event, as that of the

getting possession of the king and his family, and thereby of the keys of the royal treasury ; and, in short, holding the unfortunate royal pair under the poignards of the Jacobins, till the moment should arrive when their destruction might be convenient.

In the present plot, the errors of the court assisted as much as usual in the aiding its enemies. At a feast given by the life guards of the king to another regiment, they committed the imprudence of getting drunk, and expressing in very plain terms their attachment to their king, and their contempt for his enemies. The royal family had honoured their faithful servants by appearing in the room where the banquet was given, and if any thing could add to the enthusiasm which wine and music inspired, it was the presence of the Queen of France ; the guards became frantic, and their gestures, their words, and their songs, were all, as might indeed have been expected, repeated to their enemies. Though the king and queen had only appeared for a moment, and had witnessed nothing of the mad scene, yet they had heard of it without disapproving ; and how was it possible for human nature to testify displeasure, situated as they were ? Abandoned by the greater number of their former friends, and by the army, and particularly by the regiment of French guards, it was impossible to feel displeasure
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sure at the affection of the few faithful servants who remained ; and the king of France did not know what it was to assume the appearance of anger that he could not feel. In his prosperity he never had done so, and to his latest hour he was never known to do it, neither did he probably think it necessary. Without either plans or plots, at that time, the court was totally unguarded, and its enemies considered this as the signal for striking the blow.

Reports had been industriously spread that the king had a design of escaping, and throwing himself and his family into the frontier fortress of Metz, but no traces of such a plan were ever discovered, although they have been much searched for ; and though a plot deranged is generally unravelled, and in this case ought not to have been very difficult, as the victorious party were left masters of Versailles, and therefore had every means of acquiring information that could be wished for ; information so eagerly sought after, but which never was obtained.

Although the whole nation might be said to be converted into spies over the actions of the court ; although accusation as well as insurrection was considered as one of the virtuous actions and duties of free men, yet no person ever came forward to offer a single fact that could only to the

probability of the existence of such a plot. The feast of the king's guards, and the unsuspicious conduct of the court, did not look as if a plot of this sort was in train, for then all parties would have been more on their guard. Besides, the evident intention of the court was to acquire sufficiently the affections of the regiment of Flanders, which was newly arrived at Versailles, in order to be out of the reach of any ill treatment from the rebel soldiers of the French guards, who being incorporated with the national guards, claimed the right of guarding the king in rotation with the others.

Nothing could equal the fears which the court entertained of the revolted guards, (who at all times had been, as individuals, every thing that was bad,) since the great victory of the Bastile, since they had chased away their officers, and were daily seen committing every excess of which soldiers intoxicated, and without subordination, are capable. They had obliged the town of Paris to distribute a large sum of money amongst them, under the false pretence of its being their due; and were now decorated with an order instituted to commemorate the victory of the Bastile, they were held in detestation by all sober citizens, as well as by the court, so that it could be no matter of wonder if the inhabitants of the palace were afraid of their mounting guard there. Though the method of securing the affection of another regi-

regiment was both useless and imprudent, it was not unnatural,* and accounts very well for what happened.

The scarcity of bread in Paris, which was alarmingly great, was attributed to the court, although the court, it was notorious, had no means either of doing good or harm. It is true, that there was reason to think that the enemies of the new system, who were always ready to speak, but never to act, did expect that the people would be soon disgusted with liberty and no bread; that they had circulated a sort of *bon-mot* on the subject, to the purpose, that when the people had but one king, they had plenty of bread, but now that they had twelve hundred kings, they had none. Scarcity of bread is too serious an evil for those who feel it, to give any relish to a joke, and it is as impolitic as it is cruel, to think of

* There does not seem to be any possibility of restoring discipline to soldiers *by good treatment*, after it is lost; and undisciplined men can never be counted upon for any thing but revolt: it is therefore very well for those who want plunder and disorder, to employ such means, but not for those who wish the contrary. On the affair of the 4th of October, women, who were in the most shabby attire, were seen distributing money amongst the soldiers of that same regiment, who did as the French guards had done in the month of July, they revolted against their officers, and became a mutinous, useless regiment from that very hour.

producing any good in any case, by occasioning a scarcity of the necessaries of life amongst the poor. It would be just as wise to think of employing an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, to prevent the invasion of Italy, as to think of turning to any good purpose a tumult occasioned by the want of so necessary an article as bread.

The impatience of the people was so much the greater, that they expected the revolution would have been terminated before this time. The general notion was, that happiness, freedom and plenty would be established before the winter came on; and now that it was fast approaching they saw their misery as quickly augmenting; all this put the Parisians, who are naturally the most impatient people in the world, in a fermentation, that needed but the signal for breaking out in acts of violence.

The court was the only mark at which the people could direct their fury, unless upon the supposition of the national assembly being become unpopular, which could not be the case, as it had only been employed in making harangues to please, and destroying whatever might displease the people; whereas the king, by having refused to sanction the bill of rights, and some other decrees of the assembly, seemed to be the cause of that ruin of credit and confidence, and that stagnation of the
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circulation of money, and of the necessaries of life, which tormented and frightened every one.

Still, perhaps, the tumult would not have broke out with great violence, had not money been distributed amongst the dregs of the people by unknown agents. The workmen who were employed from charity to remove earth upon the hill of Montmartre, were seen playing at petit palet with double louis d'ors, in the midst of this general distress for money; and the lowest and most abandoned of the market women were seen with their pockets full of pieces of six livres.

It was this same description of people, that on the Monday morning, the 4th of October, went in a tumultuous manner to the town-house, overturned the desks, broke open the drawers, and from thence went off to Versailles, about ten o'clock, upon the pretence of seeking bread. Along with this rabble went a portion of the licentious regiment of French guards; they dragged with them some pieces of cannon, and forced all the women they met to accompany them. The women, particularly those who were better dressed than the others, and were thus compelled to march, were placed in front, with the avowed design of preventing those persons attached to his majesty, who might be inclined, to resist from

firing upon women, who, for any thing they knew, might be their own relations.

A man of the name of Maillard put himself at the head of this unruly army, and was in some measure obeyed, so that until they arrived at Versailles, less damage was done than from such a mob might have been expected.

But the national guards of Paris, as well as the more decent class of citizens who remained, were extremely uneasy. Great numbers of people having been compelled to march, every one was anxious that they might not be butchered by the life guards and the regiment of Flanders. This natural anxiety, more than any other reason, determined them to follow to Versailles. M. de la Fayette hesitated to obey those whom he expected to command, but was forced to comply by the unanswerable argument of the lantern, which was just ready within a few yards of his horse, and which it is not to be doubted would have been employed.

About five in the afternoon this second emigration from Paris took place, and la Fayette went literally guarded as a prisoner by his own troops, and apparently with the greatest reluctance.* It is

* Two American gentlemen, friends of la Fayette, met this cavalcade near the gate of Chaillot, by the Champs Elisées; he seemed

is of importance to observe, that nobody in Paris had any idea that they were gone to fetch the king and royal family, although they did not fail on their return to give that as their object. M. Rabaut says in his history, "that no pencil can paint the frantic joy of the Parisians on seeing the guards march with an intention of seeking and bringing away their king." It is very strange that he alone should have heard of the joy, for it is certain, that except on the first night of the revolution, and perhaps not even then, were the people of Paris so uneasy from fear of the catastrophe that next day was probably to witness.

The citizens who remained, applauded, indeed, those who went, wished they might succeed, and return safe; but the uncertainty of the event was such, as could not in the nature of things admit of frantic joy; there was scarcely a family in Paris where the father, mother, or some of the sons or daughters were not gone upon that uncertain and dangerous expedition. It was very natural to wish to see it terminated peaceably by the national guards, whose arrival during the night would at least prevent bloodshed from continuing, should

seemed to them to be in a state of great consternation, and having stopped his horse only an instant as they passed by, one of the national soldiers took him by his bridle instantly, and with an oath forced him to advance.

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it have been commenced ; but farther than this, it was impossible they could, in such circumstances, carry their hopes.

The disorder on the arrival of the first troop at Versailles was immense. The hall of the assembly was near the road to the palace, so that naturally they must stop there first. Maillard, the commander, spoke for the troop at first, and demanded bread and reparation for the affront offered to the nation by the life guards.

The assembly sent a deputation to the king to acquaint him with the demands of the mob, and to require his sanction of the bill of rights, together with some other articles of the constitution. The answer of the king to the demand of the people was a promise on his part to do every thing in his power to aid them, and to the assembly an acceptance of the act, but with some observations. The assembly would admit of no observations, which they said were a sort of protest against the sanction ; so that the king was obliged to obey, and thus once more made a sacrifice of power, without gaining any credit or good will by what he did.

As it is our business to trace out those events that evidently took place by design, rather than to turn our attention to what were merely the effects

fects of accident, it is not very much to our purpose to inquire into the inevitable disorders of that afternoon and evening. How could some quarrels be avoided, although the king had given orders not to fire, and his guards did not fire? the people who had come from Paris, whatever might be the intention of the greater number, formed too promiscuous an assemblage to be all guided by any one sentiment; plunder was the end of many amongst them, and plunder could only be obtained by exciting disorder; for so long as the iron rails and the iron gates facing the palace were kept shut, there was no more chance of plunder than if they had been upon a barren heath. Several attempts were made to force the gate, and in the dark the confusion was great, but without serious consequences.

M. de la Fayette arrived with his 15,000 commanders towards midnight. The time and the circumstances obliged all parties to remain inactive. The national guards, instead of waiting in arms till morning, were distributed in the houses of the citizens at Versailles. The rabble, from want of any regular method of distribution, remained in groups, and some of them in the national hall, which they filled during the night, and spoke and voted along with the deputies, who affected to continue their deliberations in the midst of the tumult.

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No sooner did day-light begin to appear, than the unruly mob, which had first arrived from Paris, attacked the palace, forced the outer gates, and pursued the centinels to the inner apartments, where they thought they could make a better resistance. The threats and imprecations uttered against the queen left no doubt of what was intended, but the brave resistance of some of the life guards retarded their progress, sufficiently for the king and queen to be apprised of what was going on. Their first movement was to search each other and their children. The queen avoided death that day by escaping from her apartment only a few seconds before the door was broke open, and the assassins, who found themselves deprived of their prey, exercised their rage by committing every sort of excess that inanimate matter would permit. The banditti, though after a considerable loss of time, were proceeding to search out the king and queen, or at least to follow the queen to his majesty's apartments, when the Parisian national guards being assembled put an end to their pursuit. Several of the brave life guards fell victims to their fidelity, and two were inhumanly butchered before the king's windows by the mob.

The arrival of the Parisian guards, who were very numerous, though it prevented the perpetration of the horrid crime that was intended,
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not by any vigorous resistance that they made, but merely by their occupying all the avenues and apartments, so as to render a greater influx of the rabble impossible, did by no means put an end to the disturbances without. The king, on purpose to appease the mob, and prevent the longer continuance of murder amongst his faithful servants, appeared at a balcony over the court where the greatest crowd was assembled; the queen and the two children accompanied him, and it was then for the first time that a cry was heard of "The king to Paris." His majesty promised to go, provided his guards should be protected from farther destruction. It was now that things changed their appearance, all was joy, good-nature, and peace.

It is beyond a doubt, then, that one of the objects was to bring the king to Paris, and it seems to be equally certain, that this object was only occasioned by the failure of some other project, for in such a tumultuous and mixed an assembly, it was impossible that the general intention could have been concealed. It cannot be credited, that the mob left Paris the day before with the intention of doing this, and that no signs of that intention should appear. If the leaders of the mob really imagined the court wished to go to Metz, they took a method more likely to produce a bad effect than a good one, by menacing the
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the queen and filling the royal apartments in this manner. The national guards should have made known their intention the night before on their arrival, and all would have been peaceable.

It is possible, that there might have been two parties, as M. Rabaut says, amongst the mob, and that only one of them meant to murder the royal family; but who was the leader of this party, for it was not without a leader or leaders, that they began so precipitately at day-break to put their plan in execution? A mob without leaders assembles irregularly, and commits irregular disorders as this one did the night before; but here, on the morning of the 5th, in one quarter of an hour, that mob assembled from all the bye streets, the courts, the alleys, and other places, where, during a rainy night, they had taken shelter, and all press forward for one object, to break into the palace and seize the royal family; this was certainly not the work of chance, nor spontaneous movement, but of design; and it neither was to procure bread, to prevent the royal family from going to Metz, nor to bring the king to Paris.

A small portion of the rabble returned to Paris, carrying the heads of two of the life guards; and those who remained threw all the infamy of the massacre and attack on the palace upon them; but the fact was quite otherwise, for the women,
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the French guards, and the far greater portion of the rabble, only left Versailles at the same time with the national guards and the king. The whole of the mob was present at the attack on the palace, and though only a small number could penetrate into the interior, it is allowed by every one, that till the national guards came, all parties operated to the same end, though that end having failed, it was very natural, as well as convenient, to disavow it.

M. Rabaut says, at this moment the national character was displayed in all its candour: we must be at a loss to conceive, what idea he entertained of candour, when he applies it to any part of what happened that day, which even the enemies of kings could only vindicate on the supposition, that by such infamies greater misery was avoided to the nation. It would be absurd to throw upon the people all the blame of such actions which were evidently conducted by a party, and which were vindicated by the assembly, and by all those persons who had the power in their hands. Why, if only a small number were known to be guilty of these excesses, was not that small number punished, or, at least, sought after? If the rulers of the assembly did not approve of making the king prisoner in this manner, why did they not shew their displeasure? On the contrary, to remove every difficulty in
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the way, they decreed, that they would not separate from the king, and that a deputation of their members should accompany him to Paris; to some of the members of which deputation an order was given to seek out the most commodious place in Paris for holding the fittings of the assembly.

The procession of fallen majesty to Paris was one of the most confused, the most humiliating, and the most riotous that was ever exhibited. The candour of the nation might be perceptible to some persons, but its depravity and ferocity of manners were evident to all. The king's carriages, preceded, and followed by the revolted guards and citizens in insurrection, mixed with the life guards, with whom, under the appearance of reconciliation, they had changed part of their uniforms, men and women of the lowest and most haggard appearance riding upon cannons, and carrying loaves upon the points of pikes; all this together filled the road for several miles, and arrived at Paris in the evening of the same day.

The Parisians, in general, seemed rejoiced to possess their king within their walls; they were taught to believe, that it would lower the price of bread and restore plenty; and there was actually some foundation for this belief, for now
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the assembly might be considered as the supreme head of the nation, to whose will nobody could any longer oppose resistance; whereas before they had the court, which still preserved some power, and the assembly, which of consequence was limited as to its authority, and as the two were at variance, the confidence in government could not be such as in the case of one supreme will, or a concurrence of wills, tending towards one purpose.

It would be improper and unfair, to say that the party of the duke of Orleans actually aspired either at the regency or the throne, because it has not been proved; but then it is to be observed, the contrary was by no means established. It would be equally unfair to acquit the duke on account of the report of M. Chabron [Note I.] in which he was found not guilty, as it would be to condemn him, because the revolutionary tribunal condemned him as guilty. At no time has justice been administered in France since the revolution, and every person who has been judged by any of the tribunals for political affairs, has suffered, or been acquitted according to the power and influence of his party at the time.

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The inquiry concerning the duke, though it ended in his favour, certainly tends much more to find him guilty than otherwise, though there was not any positive proof. It is certain, that during the Monday he was in the Bois de Boulogne on horseback, and sending messengers (jockies or stable boys) with the greatest speed to Versailles and Paris at different intervals; it is certain, that during the night he was not visible, either at Paris or Versailles; and different persons gave evidence, that they saw two men, whom they supposed to be him and the duke de Biron in disguise, pointing out the passage that led to the queen's apartments in the morning of the attack. A person was heard to say in the crowd, when the queen had escaped, and the national guards were arriving, "*Monseigneur le coup est manqué.*" No other person but himself, could be addressed in this stile, and about ten o'clock he arrived in his post chaise and four from Paris, to assist in his place at the assembly as usual. The duke had the best horses in France, and in three quarters of an hour could go from Paris to Versailles, and he had at least three hours and an half to perform this journey, having from half past six to ten. It is true, some of the duke's servants swore to his being at home and in bed all night; but this was the most improbable of all things. The duke was a very active man, and
never

never went to bed when interest or ambition required him to be up. He was deeply concerned in the result of this business, whether it was his own plan or not, and as he was proved to have been very much employed the day before, his going to Paris and *sleeping* was extremely improbable; and even his deliberate arrival at Versailles at the usual hour of going to the assembly, was a proof that he wanted to conceal something; for it was like a man arriving who knew nothing of what what was going on, which could not be the case. All this was a proof presumptive, at least, of his being guilty; and if any one feels a reluctance to find him so, let his conduct since voting for the death of the king be remembered, which puts his criminality of intention beyond a doubt.

To all these reasons are to be added the conduct and opinion of M. Mounier, who was president at the time; who was far from being a friend to absolute power, (as he was, as has been said, the author of the Rights of Man, such as it was, adopted by the assembly,) but who was a royalist, and who left the chair of the president, addressing himself to Mirabeau in these memorable words, "*Je ne veux etre, ni coupable, ni complice.*"* This was in answer to a demand made to him by Mirabeau, who had, during the whole

* I will neither be principal nor accomplice in crimes.

day, been going backwards and forwards from the president to the mob, and making different propositions.

Previous to this day, the last of the liberty of Louis XVI. numbers of meetings had been held at Mousseaux, a seat of the duke's near Paris, remarkable for its gardens in the English style, and its arrangement as a place favourable for pleasure and debauchery. Mirabeau and the Abbé Seyeyes had assisted at these meetings, with several other deputies; though, when the affair was over, Mirabeau appeared as if he had quarrelled with the duke, and is said to have expressed himself in a very forcible style, (which, however, it would be indecent verbatim to repeat), signifying, that the duke was capable of plotting the blackest of crimes, but too great a coward to assist in the execution.

Perhaps the thing that may the most convince impartial men of the existence of a criminal plot, is, that the moderate party of the reformers in the assembly, that is, those who were royalists, but had obtained popular favour by their eloquence and love of liberty, were those whom the party in power, the Lameths, Barnave, Mirabeau, &c. turned against with the greatest fury. Mounier, the Count de Lally Tolendal, and upwards of forty more of the moderate party, received

ceived anonymous letters threatening their lives. One of the ministers received the list, and communicated it to the proscribed members, most of whom immediately disappeared; some returned afterwards, and others, amongst whom M. Mounier was one, never came back.

This was the more extraordinary, and leads the more decidedly to a conclusion, that the Abbé Maury, M. de Cazales, Maluett, and others, who were at all times opposed to the new system, were not menaced, but remained quiet. This would seem to be a proof that the reigning party were more afraid of those men who were attached to liberty than of the pure royalists, as the personal characters of the former left no hopes of leading them over to the violent measures in view. It is a singular enough fact, that the person who laid the first foundation of the projected constitution, by the Rights of Man, should already be obliged to fly; for, certainly, had nothing but liberty been the object, he was one of the most useful men in the assembly.

Amongst such a complication of causes and events, we must be contented to seize upon the leading facts; and in viewing them, every thing tends to prove that there was a plot, the object of which was either to massacre the royal family,

or to put them entirely into the power of the leaders of the revolution.

There certainly can be no injustice in laying to the charge of the men who protected and vindicated their perpetrators, a part of the guilt of those crimes, particularly as a great portion of these same men have been themselves guilty of similar ones since then.

However the truth may be with regard to the exact degree of culpability of the actors in this affair, and the primitive movers, certain it is that all parties, except, as may be supposed, that of the court, seemed pleased with the change, as in times of calamity almost any change is agreeable that affords hope.

There were, however, two great changes which no well-meaning man could approve of, that arose out of this. The king became a prisoner, and, as such, was of no use as a king; and the assembly, by being in the midst of a large town, upon all occasions ready to revolt, and where the number of idle vagabonds who surrounded the hall amounted upon an average to eight or ten thousand, and upon occasions to many more, became only the tool of the faction which governed the mob. By this change royalty was destroyed, and the national representation degraded. Paris became
then

then the mistress of France, and the idle blackguards the rulers of the assembly.

Such, from that time forward was the government of France, with the fame of which the whole of Europe has resounded; which men, pretending to love liberty, have exalted above whatever existed either in ancient or modern times, and for resisting which, or even for censuring which, men who are true lovers and supporters of liberty have been abused and calumniated. The atrocities committed, the daily journals published at the time, and the declaration of those leaders, who have since then lost their popularity, are all proofs of the truth of what we are here saying; and without the gift of prophesy, we may announce, that the day will come when the yoke of Paris will become insupportable to France; when the odium it merits will fall upon the system of insurrection and of affiliated clubs; the assembly will cease to inhabit a town where it never has been, is not, and never will be free. A period may then be expected to that excess of anarchy, which we have seen take place under all the different factions; for nothing is more certain than this, that even the dregs of the nation, if elected into an assembly and permitted to reign, without being the slave of insurrections, would govern better than the most virtuous assembly under the power of the rabble.

Transfer the inhabitants of Botany Bay to France, and make them a free and independent assembly, they would enrich themselves first, but then they would establish order; whereas the principle of insurrection does not permit the rulers to become rich, because those who compose the mob rule, and that is always the portion of the people that has nothing to lose.

The three powers actually existing in France after the fifth of October were, the Assembly, the Municipality of Paris, and the Jacobin club. The balance of power between these three was, the people in insurrection; whichever of the three could succeed best with the mob, was master of the field. During almost all the time of the first assembly the Jacobins, and the municipality, headed by M. Bailly and La Fayette, were opposed to each other; the rabble and the national guards were the soldiers of the two parties, and the assembly was in the Jacobin interest. When Petion became mayor and Santerre commandant, then the municipality and the club were united and ruled the assembly, because they commanded both the mob and the soldiers; and from this formidable coalition arose the power of Robespierre and the committees, which with their colossal weight destroyed the energy of the municipality and the club, thereby preparing for themselves

selfes a fall, as soon as the national assembly should have an opportunity of exerting itself.

It is this perpetual conflict of powers that we are now going to follow, but which being deprived of that novelty that attended the first transactions of the revolution, we do not think it necessary to follow out very minutely, particularly as the great operations are already performed; and what followed, reduces itself to a variation in the forms of despotism and anarchy, attended, however, with that gradual destruction of principle and virtue amongst the people at large, that is always the consequence of disorder; we mean only from this time till the total destruction of monarchy, when the revolution took a new form, the Jacobins getting entirely the better, and for some time reigning alone, with the multitude at their command; for the municipality was then composed of Jacobins, the assembly was composed of Jacobins, and every public office filled throughout the kingdom with them.

There is a very unfortunate thing attends all general movements, when opposed by no force. Men calculate personal safety, and not personal interest, so that through fear, granaries of corn and of flour are delivered up without any regard to price. This makes a momentary plenty, only in the end to increase the want, and the populace is
led

led into 'an error, and conceives that insurrection and disorder create plenty. The Jacobin society has always alledged, that the aristocrats made commodities of necessity dear, and Rabaut in his history descends so low as to say, that loaves were bought from the bakers and thrown into the river; it would be descending almost as low as himself to condescend to refute what was so unnatural, so useless, so dangerous, and one may almost say, so impossible.' We should take no notice of this, if it were not that here we get a fair specimen of that gentleman's regard to truth, and of his research, for as to the thing itself it does not deserve refutation,

First of all, the flour that came to Paris daily, went all to one general hall or market, through which every person might pass, and it is notoriously certain, that the bakers who came there to buy, could not be supplied with so much as they wanted. That instead of the building * being filled with sacks, piled upon each other, it was almost empty; this therefore was an evident and well known cause for the dearth and scarcity of bread in Paris; therefore, as it is not necessary to seek any farther, much less suppose that the

* The hall au Bled was a curious piece of architecture, being a high dome, not unlike that of St. Paul's, and one half of it glass.

aristocrats * would go to the doors of the bakers, before day light in the morning, and wait till two or three in the afternoon to get a loaf to throw into the river ; observing at the same time, that the strange animal an aristocrat, eats as well as a democrat, and had no other means of getting his provisions than other people. M. Rabaut wrote his history long after the absurdity and falsity of this report, which was only circulated to inflame the minds of the people, had been fully refuted by a melancholy affair that took place a few days after the king had been brought prisoner to the capital.

The nation,† or rather about one hundred vagabonds, pretended to have discovered an aristocratic baker ; a woman who was before his door waiting for bread, had advanced that he threw his loaves into the river, and in one moment he was dragged from his wife and family, was hanged, and the patriotic mob thinking the wife of an aristocrat deserved little better treatment than her husband, brought his bloody head and threw it down upon the table before the affrighted woman, who was in the last month of her pregnancy. All Paris shuddered at the deed, except those who frequented the popular societies : it was soon

* I use the word aristocrat as it was used in Paris, and not according to its real meaning, for conveniency.

† Every small body of the populace was called the nation.

discovered that the baker was a very honest and industrious man, and not an aristocrat. The pretended zeal of his murderers, for the public good, for the welfare of the people, mixed with feigned lamentations for their having mistaken their man, was what the instigators and protectors of insurrection shewed as the only atonement made to insulted humanity. No body was ever punished for this crime, though its perpetrators were known, so that the rulers of the time, the assembly, La Fayette, as commander, and Bailly, as chief of the municipality, were all culpable. M. Rabaut, as an active member of the assembly, perhaps thought he was pleading his cause, when he asserted that the destruction of the bread was actually known to be true. We defy any of his admirers, of his followers, or of his disciples, to prove that one single person was ever discovered throwing a loaf into the river; and we appeal to all the journals of the time, on both sides of the question, to the facts we announce; as for the conclusions from those facts, they are clear to all men, and we do not venture to assert one single thing for which the journals and other publications at the time are not vouchers.

It would be unnecessary to quote eternally the papers and books from which the facts are taken. At the end of the work there will be given a list of those publications, and such persons as chuse to

to examine them, may be convinced of the truth of whatever in this history we announce as a fact.*

Before we entirely leave this 5th of October, it will be necessary to observe, that there never was any sort of proof offered in support of the supposed project of carrying off the king to Metz; that it is, however, not impossible, that on the Monday afternoon when all the banditti of Paris arrived, carriages might be prepared in order to save the royal family from being massacred, and that those were the carriages stopt by the national guard of Versailles.

This, in place of being a proof of a long-concerted plot, has rather the appearance of being a momentary idea, occasioned by imminent danger, and certainly it was by no means an unnatural one. Those who pretend, for want of other proof to support their assertion, by the flight of the king

* The king stood godfather to the child of the baker, that was born very soon after, and gave the widow some pecuniary aid; the other *constituted authorities*, as they termed themselves, were employed in works superior to that of justice or charity. It would have been unworthy of their dignity to stoop from the grand employment of making twenty-four millions of people happy and free, by murdering and imprisoning a part, and robbing others, in order to attend to the claims of justice and humanity, in favour of a widow and a child, whom their own emissaries had treated with such unjust and barbarous violence.

two years after, do not certainly consider that the circumstances were then very different. Until the 5th of Oct. the king had been free ; but on the 20th of June, 1791, he had already been, during twenty-one months a prisoner, mal-treated, insulted, and abused. On the 5th of October his party was yet strong within the kingdom ; when he left Paris in June, they were dispersed entirely in the interior, and the only friends he supposed he had, were in other countries. At the first of these periods, his majesty had rather resisted, and having still concessions to make, might expect either to regain his former power, or at least by a sacrifice of what was left, purchase peace and confidence in a new order of things ; but at the time of his departure from the capital, he had no remnant of power left ; he had sacrificed every thing to his enemies, without purchasing peace, or acquiring confidence ; he was left almost without hope, and the journey which he so unfortunately took, was the result of necessity, and not of choice ; whereas at the time we now speak of, it must have been the result of choice, not of necessity. Besides this, all parties allow, that the king himself had never consented, nor even known of such a plan, and without his consent and knowledge, with what success could it be attended ? The enemies of a fallen king may call him what they please, but certain it is, that on all occasions he shewed the greatest desire for the good

good of his people ; if he was intractable in any thing, it was upon this subject ; whenever any thing was likely to occasion the shedding of blood, the most determined assassins were never so resolute in doing it as Louis XVI. was in preventing its being done ; that he had *character* and firmness where moral principle or religious opinion came in question, is beyond a doubt ; he has even left proofs of a strong and a vigorous mind, that will remain when the calumnies of his enemies will have been long consigned to oblivion ; and it is no small consolation to those who have wished well to his cause, that though every action of his life was known from his early youth, that though many of those who had been brought up in his palace had become his enemies, and that though he had many millions of accusers, though rewards and honours, such as miscreants can give, were all certain, for whoever could accuse him, there was not found any person who could give the shadow of probability to any thing that had the appearance of a crime ; of mistakes, he committed many, but he was a man and not an angel ; of crimes he committed none, and even his errors did not originate in himself, any farther than the errors of good men generally do, when opposed to bad, and who being incapable of conceiving their wickedness, are not capable of avoiding the snares which are spread for them.

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The massacre of the baker was the occasion of what they improperly called martial law being proclaimed, and which, in fact, was nothing more than our riot act in England. Our riot act is a standing law, and a very necessary one, but in France it was not to be a standing law; on the contrary, it was to be the suspension of the sacred right of insurrection upon certain occasions. The manner was this: When the mayor and municipal officers found tumults were going to break out, or had broke out, they were to assemble and determine whether the public force might be applied to quell the insurrection; if they determined to do so, then a red flag was to be suspended from the window of their hall, and the commander of the armed force was to have a right to read the riot act as in England, and pretty nearly in the same manner.

If, on the contrary, the mayor and council did not carry this point by a majority of voices, the riot act could not be read, and any resistance to the mob was unlawful, if it went any farther than pushing or pulling, that is to say, the swords or bayonets in the hands of the national guards, were not of so much use as clubs and stones, with which a mob can at any time arm itself.

This martial law, however, as they called it, which might be rather considered, in fact, as a
law

law to prevent the military from acting, than for empowering them to act, was a sort of triumph of the moderate party over the violent Jacobins, and served during some time to preserve order. It was for having put this law in force, the only time that it ever was done, that M. Bailly was afterwards beheaded with all the marks of ignominy which his enemies could invent. La Fayette would have shared the same fate had he staid in France, and certainly the fathers of insurrection were culpable in decreeing two principles so opposite to each other; so that those who approved of M. Bailly for having by this martial law suppressed an insurrection, and who therefore were inclined to pity him, when they saw him carried to the place of execution in a dung cart, cloathed with a red sheet, and the red flag dragging in the dirt by way of ignominy, may console themselves by considering that he and La Fayette had been the first protectors of insurrection, and that they only wanted to oppose it when it happened to be directed against themselves.

CHAP. VIII.

The national assembly decrees that the possessions of the clergy belong to the nation—Mobs around the assembly are employed to enforce the decree—A baker murdered—Martial law—Paper money, or assignats—The consequences upon all ranks—Division of France into departments—Affairs of Avignon—Injustice—Europe to be greatly blamed for looking quietly on—M. Necker sinks every day lower—Nobility abolished—General federation on the 14th of July, 1790.

THE national assembly having once obtained possession of the king's person, and of all his family, the royal treasury was, in fact, in their hands. M. Necker had already lost a great part of his reputation, and all his power; the disorder of the finances was attributed to him, and the assembly now enjoyed over him that same triumph which he formerly enjoyed over his enemies and the court. M. Necker formerly appealed to public opinion by means of the printing press, against a court which had no means of employing the same weapons, or, which if they had employed, it would have been without effect, as they were unpopular. The assembly swarmed with young orators, who

who declaimed against abuses in government and finance, and who treated M. Necker with very little ceremony. The whole nation now gave to them that attention which they formerly had so willingly given to the financier himself; and any answer he could make, served only as a matter of ridicule and abuse. That pompous stile which had so long been listened to like the syrens song, excited mockery and laughter, and his attachment to principles so much boasted, was an irreparable fault in the eyes of men whose business it was to overturn every principle. M. Necker began to shew his ill humour, and the laugh increased; and perhaps few men have received more cutting mortification than he did during the latter part of the stay which he made in France.

The partisans of Mirabeau, stimulated by their own wants and ambition, and by the vengeance of Claviere, were determined to sacrifice and dismiss Necker, to do which, the best method was to render him useless and contemptible.

The affair of finance occupied still the heads of all, and Mirabeau's party, which had opposed itself so firmly to a circulation of paper money, now laid the plan of one. The treasury was actually in their own hands, and it was now as convenient to have it filled, as it had hitherto been to keep it empty.

As the clergy had renounced part of their rights on the fourth of August, and that which remained did not seem much more sacred than that which had already been given away, it was proposed to decree as a *principle*, that the property of the clergy belonged to the nation.

This decree was opposed, however, by a vast portion of the assembly, the debates were long and warm, but the mob of citizens without the walls of the assembly offered the most convincing arguments. The members who opposed this decree were given plainly to understand, that the case was (just as at Bagshot or Blackheath,) that their lives or property must go. When there is no means of resistance, this argument is one of the most conclusive in the world, for even if there could be a comparison between the preservation of life and property, it would not alter the weight of the argument, as with the life the property must go. Amidst threats and menaces of every kind, this important question was determined, and the assembly voted away all the property of the church, not, however, without determining to hire clergymen at so much a year,* for the

* The word *falaire*, employed on this occasion, is equivalent to that of hireling; and though not a term of reproach, is, at least, one of humiliation; it was intended as such, and felt as such at the time in its fullest force.

payment of which wages the different districts would provide.

It would be unnecessary to enter into arguments in order to shew the injustice of this transaction, because, at all events, if the clergy were to be preserved at all, it would not only have been fair but wise to have left to themselves the administration of, at least, as much of their own lands as would have secured the payment of their services. It was evident, that as they were to be paid, it was useless to take all their lands away and sell them at a low price, in order afterwards to pay a yearly sum to a great amount, and by which, every calculation made, the nation lost considerably, while the clergy were left without any security or certain term of payment.

Many people foretold at the time, that those salaries would never be punctually nor long paid; and that to get quit of that debt, the nation would get quit of the clergy themselves and of religion too; and the end has but too completely justified the prediction.

This security for issuing a paper money was no sooner decreed, than Mirabeau, who a few months before had called paper money a tax levied by the bayonet, became its most zealous supporter. The contrast between his speeches

in the month of August and those of the month of January following, is one of the most striking that is to be met with; money was necessary, to borrow was impracticable; no great degree of eloquence was, therefore, required to support this measure. The famous assignats were decreed, but as it would take some time to make them, and as the wants were urgent, it was ordered, that the *Caiffe d'Escompt*, or bank of Paris, should furnish seventy-two millions in their notes upon the faith of the decree of the church lands; and as those notes had been discredited, it was decreed, at the same time, that they should pass current, like money, all through the kingdom.

This was no sooner decreed than it was executed; and notes, red, blue, and green, were presently substituted for hard cash, which disappeared almost every where, as the discredit of the paper was considerable even at its first outset.

Though the assignats have sustained the revolution, and their creation makes an epoch of great importance, yet we must avoid entering into all the details concerning them, which alone would require a great portion of a volume. The assignats are, in this History, to be considered as the means of supporting crimes, and as the cause that led to their continuation; they are, therefore, of the utmost importance, when
viewed

viewed in the great stile, but they do not require any minute investigation.

Of the assignats it is at present sufficient to say, that being creatable at will, and the circulation forced, until they become totally useless, no discredit whatever can deprive the assembly of that resource. Until it costs a million to make a million in assignats, they will still have a value, as a gold mine, which only ceases to be useful when the extraction of an ounce of gold costs the value of an ounce of gold.

The national treasury has accordingly never been empty since, although few taxes have been collected, and although the expenses have been so enormous, that at present France expends more in one month than the Roman empire expended in a year in the time of Augustus.

The artfulness with which the assignats were decreed is actually a master-piece; they were to be forced in their circulation, and only to be reimbursed by purchasing the lands of the clergy. A double purpose was thus answered, for the paper being discredited, and of no value whatever if the lands of the clergy did not sell, every man who held assignats in his hand was interested in their being sold; and to persons who received great payments in that paper, those lands, became a de-

fireable purchase; so that the sales went on rapidly, as the emission of paper increased,

The operation of the assignats is the greatest of all the operations of the levelling system, and it is similar to all their other plans, well combined, executed with energy, and so contrived as to oblige even its enemies to support it.

The assignats made the low people friends to the revolution by freeing them from taxes; those who had money in the public funds, by paying up their arrears, and the whole nation, almost by the feeling that if the revolution were overturned, this chimerical wealth, with which, however, people could eat and drink, would be destroyed.

It was the opinion of many people at the time, that this paper would finish by being totally discredited, and Mirabeau himself was heard to say, that it would become in time the cheapest book on which children could learn their letters. That period is not, however, yet come. Another invention, that of a revolutionary government and the maximum * has retarded its arrival; but it is only
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* It is impossible to use other words than their own for such things as never existed before. The revolutionary government, which is nothing else, but the will of the rulers being substituted for
for

retarded, the nature of things will bring it about; and it is more than probable, that since the guillotine has ceased to operate so actively, the assignats will also soon cease their operations.

Trade revived the moment that paper was created at will; the public treasury then paid its debts, and individuals hastened to acquit theirs also, with a money that lost considerably against gold and silver, as well as in all transactions with other nations. This change succeeding to the languid state of affairs before creation of the paper, completed the deception of the great mass of the people; and it must be confessed, that without some such invention the revolution could not have continued; for taxes must have been levied, and that requires order and force in government, and obedience in the people; so that it is, in fact, to this invention that we are to attribute the duration of disorder and anarchy in that country.

Had the other powers of Europe conceived the danger which menaced them from France at an early period, or had they with any energy or unanimity combined to destroy its resources when they did

for law, and is what, in common language, is called complete despotism.

The maximum is a fixed price put upon all articles payable in assignats.

dis-

discover the danger, the crisis in which Europe is at this day involved would never have existed.

Mirabeau and the Jacobins knew the courts of Europe, but the courts of Europe were not at the pains to study Mirabeau and the Jacobins. The contempt for each other was mutual, too much attached to routine and ancient custom, and to those diplomatic arts which they practise against each other, the courts despised men who discussed all the secrets of state publicly, and who openly and boldly set about defying the whole world, and pulling down whatever was solid or sacred amongst themselves.

Mirabeau and his associates, on the other hand, feeling what hardiness and energy could do, feeling, above all, that the work of destruction is an easy one, and that destruction was their business, trusted to the rapidity of their progress for success; they knew that while the cabinets would only be corresponding upon the subject, they would totally overturn France, and with that the balance of power in Europe, and then each one might do his best.

In order the better to prevent any possibility of the ancient order of things from being restored, a new division of France was proposed by the Abbé Seyeyes.

Seyeyes. It was first proposed to divide it geometrically into squares, as the United States of America do their new lands; but the impracticability of this absurd plan produced a modification in the execution. As mankind had not been prepared for this effort of human genius in past ages, towns, villages, gardens, &c. would have been divided, and, as a wit in the assembly observed, the kitchen might, perhaps, be in one department and the dining-room in another; so that one could not punish the cook if he should spoil his dinner without a long proceeding between the two departments. It was, therefore, resolved to adopt another plan, and France was divided into eighty-three departments, which were named from the remarkable rivers or mountains to be found in each.

Navarre, Dauphiné, Lorrain, Alsace, and other portions of France, which were formerly separate principalities, and which still retained many laws, customs, and privileges, that were different from each other, were thus all amalgamated into one. This destroyed the pretensions of the parliaments, and laid the foundation for the whole kingdom becoming, at some future period, a single people, with the same laws, language, and manners.

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The appearance of philosophy and genius, which was artfully given to all those new regulations, inspired the people with respect for the men who made them. If the appearance of religion served as a colour for the errors into which men were led some centuries ago, the appearance of virtue and philosophy have been no less used in this singular revolution. The preamble to every decree was composed with a design to inspire respect and blind confidence; the motives were represented as good, and the means as wise and just; and if there had been a disposition to inquire into the wisdom and justice, the rapidity with which the new regulations succeeded each other baffled all examination.

Although the general run of decrees were favourable to the majority, yet they were not always favourable. Besides this, La Fayette, Bailly, and some others, who, by having got the advantage in point of time of their colleagues, had got into places of power or profit, were not ready to support every change. They were well, and they wanted to continue so; this created a sort of schism or division in the assembly, and the moderate party retired from the Jacobin club. This division might, perhaps, have rendered the revolution tolerable, had not the club, by means of its affiliations, regulated the whole kingdom; and

and had it not, by its members dispersed through Paris, contrived, whenever they thought proper to stir up a tumult, to surround the assembly, and so to make any difficult decree pass.

The friends of the French revolution cannot deny that this was the constant practice; we are not speaking of things that passed a thousand years ago, but for which there are thousands of living witnesses, besides the papers published at the time. Neither can it be said, that this was liberty; so that they must confess, that if they have not been the associates in the deception, they have, at least, been the dupes of it.

It was now that the leaders of the assembly, feeling themselves powerful, begun to shew openly what they aspired at. Universal dominion was their theme; not, however, as they pretended, a dominion acquired by the sword, but by reason and by wisdom; and in the mean time they begun by seizing upon the small territory of Avignon, which had been ceded formerly to the Pope, and the cession of which had been repeatedly ratified.

The arguments by which they endeavoured to support this invasion were too weak to deserve the name of reasons; they accordingly imposed upon

upon no person whatever; but force, which is stronger than argument, was all on the side of the assembly.

Such a violation of the rights of nations should not have been overlooked by the powers of Europe, because it was a beginning of that system by which the assembly intended to aggrandise France at the expense of other sovereigns. It was opening one of those doors which lead to the destruction of the political state of society; and, in fact, when careless, slothful Europe saw the defenceless head of the Church of Rome robbed of his rights, it aided and abetted that system by which its own future destruction was planned. When the peaceable inhabitants of a town stand by, and see one man shed another's blood, or pillage his property, without defending him, the bonds of that society are broken, and the foundation of its ruin laid. The discord, the want of plan and want of energy, which we have since witnessed amongst the nations leagued against France, are only a continuation of that same conduct. Selfishness has taken place of the love of the general interest; when men, or nations are old, they become indifferent to every thing but ease or profit.

In individuals, the selfish passions are the only ones that increase with age, and they increase
from

from natural feelings, and not from reason and calculation. Thus at seventy, we see selfish misers and gluttons; and as love, generosity, and ambition of glory cease, the individual becomes selfish and groveling. Something the same, it would appear, is the case with kingdoms. What energy has the Empire shewn, that used to shew so much; or Spain, or Italy, or Holland? They all saw the evil approach, and, like the frightened traveller who waits for the serpent, they made no effort equal to their power, or worthy of their former greatness. But if they will not prepare seriously to resist, they must prepare seriously to suffer; for France will give law to Europe if she once gets the better, and then adieu to those principalities and powers who have quarrelled about useless etiquette, when they should have rivalled each other in manly courage, and who will continue, in all likelihood, to dispute about their rights and privileges, till there will none remain for them to dispute about.

The revolution of Avignon was conducted upon the same principle with the other manoeuvres of the Jacobins. At the same time that the assembly was debating whether they should take possession of it or not, a chosen band of assassins, with a man of the name of Jourdan at their head, who by way of pre-eminence was distinguished by title of Cut-throat, (*coup tête*, which is the same thing)

thing) were dispatched to that beautiful spot, where the peaceable nature of the inhabitants was equal to the excellence of the climate. Those banditti emissaries begun by instituting a club and gaining partisans amongst the people, and they finished by massacring a part of the most respectable and peaceable inhabitants, and forcing the remainder to meet in an assembly, and vote their union with the kingdom of France. The assembly by this sort of management had the appearance of only acceding to the will of the majority of the inhabitants, when they afterwards declared that Avignon was an integrant part of the kingdom.

The horrors committed in Avignon were shocking; nothing but the greater horrors that have since been committed all over France, could diminish the sensation which they inspired. Long did men repeat with dismay the name of the glaciis under the walls of Avignon, which was filled up with the dead bodies of its slaughtered inhabitants. Every sort of outrage that is committed upon the inhabitants of a city taken by storm by an enraged and lawless soldiery, was committed on this miserable town. Murder, pillage, and women violated in the most brutal manner, were the works of Jourdan and his associates, while their masters of the assembly and the Jacobin club named commissaries to go and settle

settle differences which they pretended had arisen amongst the inhabitants, and between Avignon and Carpentras. Whether the villainy or the impudence of such conduct were the greater, posterity must judge, as the present age does not seem sufficiently alive to what is going on, and, by its silence, seems not entirely to disapprove of these acts of injustice and ferocity.

Ye men of feeling, of humanity, of research, and ye who employ volumes to describe a ceremony in Hindostan, who seem to be penetrated with the desire of discovering truth in Africa, the wilds of America, and the farthest Indies, what have you been about? Is the track of a ship, or the form of a rock, or are the manners of a savage nation, either so curious or so important, as the change that the human mind has undergone in Europe since the beginning of the French revolution? We may grant that such researches are more entertaining, but they are much less useful; for destruction advances, and sooner or later will arrive, unless we make as great an effort to ward it off as others do to bring it on.

The commissaries who went to Avignon were loaded with decrees and assignats; for it was too important a point to make good, and secure their first conquest, not to make every effort to do so. The attempts of the Sovereign Pontiff to regain

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the lost territory were only subjects for mirth and ridicule at Paris; and as the whole nation participated in what was done, it was a sort of separation already declared between the French and the Church of Rome.

The assembly was astonished that other powers did not meddle seriously in this affair; and it was even believed by many that certain of its leaders actually intended to stir up a foreign war, and thereby give scope to the ambitious and idle, who in France begun by this time to be too numerous for those who were already at the top of the tree. This opinion, however, does not seem to be well founded; it is, no doubt, certain, that Avignon was seized with a hardy hand at the risk of going to war, and there can be little doubt that they would have insisted on maintaining the possession of it at all risks; but still that is very different from its being attacked on purpose to create a foreign war, which at that time would have been attended with great danger; the old system had not been long enough destroyed, nor was the new one sufficiently established, to run so great a risk with intention.

The character of the leading deputies was rather that of bravadoes than of brave men; they acted like themselves when they robbed the defenceless, feeble Pope, and when they braved all Europe;

Europe; but it is far from probable that they did it with a design to engage in hostilities; particularly as they might have found a better occasion by assisting the people of Flanders and Brabant against the Emperor Joseph the Second, who was then on his death-bed.

The nature of the Jacobins is to bully and intimidate by hardiness, but not to fight till it becomes unavoidable: as long as they can gain their ends by insurrections, or by stirring up dissensions, they will prefer that to arms; nevertheless, when arms are necessary they are ready. They cannot be called brave in the true sense of the word, but they are hardy and determined, and do not want courage, when pushed, as they have shewn to all Europe since that time.

The means which a people has of becoming formidable to its neighbours are very great, when they listen to the ideas of all who have any to propose, when they take the best, or what seem to them to be the best, and when they are never at a loss for money to put them in execution, and when they never let a principle of right or justice stand in their way; and such advantages the Jacobins enjoyed even from the commencement of the revolution.

When the assembly had divided the kingdom into eighty-three departments, and forty-seven

thousand municipalities, each of which had the command of the armed force within itself, the executive power was no longer formidable, and, of consequence, it was but of little importance to the leaders of the assembly whether their decrees met with approbation from that quarter or not. The executive power was only, as they termed it, *un hochet d'enfant* (a child's rattle.) When great legislators have subdivided nations, with an intention of promoting the cause of order or the distribution of justice, it has always been done with an attention to subordination, and that gradation of power, that connection, which renders the whole capable of energy *as a whole*, though the parts can act separately for particular purposes.

The departments were regulated by twenty-four members, who deliberated and gave their orders collectively, and who were, therefore, in a certain degree independent of superior orders. At any rate it would have been wise, in cases of superior orders, to have not only dispensed with the deliberations of the department, but even to have strictly forbidden all such deliberations, and to have made the president of the department, or his substitute, transmit or execute the order without formality or delay. This, however, was carefully avoided, and the orders of the king were liable to be canvassed and examined in every department:

partment; and, upon the least pretext of not agreeing amongst themselves, or of not comprehending the order, a delay might be obtained without incurring any degree of censure.

This was extremely unfavourable to the kingly government, but extremely favourable for that of the Jacobins, who had many friends amongst the members of all the departments, and who, if that failed, could, and did, call to their aid the clubs in the department, who either by menaces or intrigues defeated every measure which was not agreeable to the prime movers at Paris.

The obedience which the nation had given to the will of its deputies did not, however, so far satisfy the leaders, as to put them at their ease with respect to the chicane by which they had placed themselves actually upon the throne of France. They were by no means satisfied with the negative approbation of their constituents, who might at a future day call to mind their cahiers of instructions, and ask by what authority they had metamorphosed the States General into a National Assembly. Such a thing might, in some future time, be asked; it was, therefore, proposed to celebrate the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille by a public solemnity, at which the whole nation should assist by deputies chosen from amongst the national guards of each

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department.

department. This fête was called a fœderation, and was to serve as a testimony of the approbation of the whole national guards of France in favour of the revolution. They were to swear, as military men, to obey the king and the assembly, and to be faithful to the cause of liberty. Such was the project; it was represented as a meeting of brothers and friends, assembled from all parts of the same country, with one intention and one mind.

In this fœderation, that at its first appearance seemed only a sort of military parade, much more was meant than empty form, and merely an exchange of good wishes and good will. The national guards consisted of all the voters in the kingdom; so that the nation might with greater propriety be said to be represented by the deputies called fœderates, whom those guards sent to Paris, than by the National Assembly itself. It was, therefore, by no means an ill-concerted scheme to jockey the nation out of its approbation of their conduct, and no pains were spared upon this great occasion to raise enthusiasm to its highest pitch.

Previous to so sublime a spectacle, it was proposed by the leading members of the assembly to abolish all titles of nobility, all coats of arms or other signs of feudal times, “that,” as they emphatically

phatically expressed themselves, “neither the
“eyes nor the ears of their virtuous fellow citi-
“zens might be offended by the remains of def-
“potism.”

A decree had been passed after the 4th of August, which forbid the assembly, in an evening sitting, making any constitutional law; for which they, with great propriety, assigned this good reason, that, after having deliberated all the morning, and till three o'clock, and then dining copiously, the mind was not in a state fit for such weighty affairs. The abolition of nobility was an act of this sort, and, therefore, should have been deliberated in the sitting of the morning; it ought also to have been given notice of before it was brought on; but as both these formalities might have been very injurious to the success of the design, it was thought proper to dispense with them.

Amongst the violent Jacobins of Paris was a Prussian, known first by the name of Cloutz the Prussian, under which name he used to write in the public papers; he next took the name of the section in which he lived;* and lastly named himself Anacharsis Cloutz orator of the human race. This man, with an exalted brain, and not without learning and imagination, but without

* Val de Grace.

any solidity of judgement, appeared at the bar of the national assembly on a Saturday evening, when nothing material was expected to be debated. Cloutz was at the head of a group of people dressed in all different sorts of dresses, Africans, Chinese, Americans, Poles, Turks, Siberians, &c. as well as English, Dutch, Germans, and Spaniards, were there, that is to say, the dresses of the inhabitants of those countries were there. Cloutz made a speech, in which he declared himself to be the orator of the whole human race: he affirmed, that all men were his constituents, and that those who followed him came from their different nations to testify their joy and approbation at the labours of so wise an assembly. The wisdom of the assembly was such, that its orator, or president, returned the compliment of the human race in a similar style. The enthusiasm of the human race, of the assembly, and of the gallery, was complete; and as a sacrifice to such generous feelings, a descendant of the ancient family of Montmorency* proposed abolishing all titles and insignia of nobility, as being emblems of pride, folly, and despotism. The Jacobin side of the assembly was all there, and amongst others La Fayette, though of late he had been but seldom permitted to attend by his duty as commander of the national guards.

* The family of Montmorency produced a man named Mathieu, who was the mover of this decree,

Thus was the old order of nobility in France destroyed in about two hours, in a fit of frenzy rather than of cool reasoning, and attended with a mock farce, that will always be considered as a disgrace to the constituent assembly.*

It has always been observed, that when the assembly passed a decree to destroy any thing, it was immediately put in execution; but when it passed a decree to establish any thing new, conducive to order, or the observance of law, it was slowly, and often never executed. This decree about armorial signs was soon put in execution, and that sort of destruction to which they have since given the name of *vandalisme*, was begun by mutilating of the famous monument in the Place des Victoires at Paris; not that it had any particular connection with nobility, but that, probably, it was a part of their plan, by degrading monuments of kingly power, to prepare the minds of people for destroying the thing itself.

This decree, tho' passed only three weeks before the foederation, was put in full force all over the kingdom before that meeting took place. The Jacobin

* The representatives of England, Italy, Germany, &c, were chiefly teachers of languages, who were induced to go by being promised a place of honour at the approaching fête. The dresses of the Chinese, &c. came from the wardrobe of the opera.

club had not been idle all this time, it had written to all its affiliated clubs or popular societies, (as they began to be called) to impress them with the necessity of sending good staunch patriots to the fœderation. This was accordingly done, and afforded an excellent opportunity for judging between the Jacobins of the country and those of Paris. The former, although the cream of the provinces, were very different men from those of the latter; they were many degrees below them in violence and patriotic zeal, and as many above them in cool firmness and good intention.

The royalist party conceived hopes of yet triumphing, when they saw that the bulk of the nation was composed of men so different from those who conducted every thing at Paris; but they reckoned too hastily. As it cost considerable sums to come to Paris, and the system of sans culotism was not yet in vogue, the federés were all men of some property, who came at their own expense, and who, though they were the best Jacobins that could be got of that description, yet they were by no means the same men that conducted the clubs. Both parties were deceived for the moment by this circumstance; the Jacobins entertained useless fears and the royalists useless hopes; for in going back into their provinces, the fœderates carried with them a little of the enthusiasm of Paris and their own insignificance.

Every

Every art was employed to work up the public mind to a pitch of delirium for the fœderation, and thereby attach the whole people more firmly to the new order of things.*

This fœderation was held in the Field of Mars, where a sort of theatre was formed of earth, with wooden seats, and an altar, or mound of earth surmounted with an altar in the middle. Here the whole of the fœderates, with La Fayette at their head, and in presence of the royal family, swore to be faithful to the king, the nation, and the law, TO PRESERVE THE CONSTITUTION.

It was not to take any oath to the constitution that they had been deputed there, because the constitution was not yet half formed; but it did not serve the less to bind them on that account. It is one of the many imperfections of human nature to persist in an absurdity with greater obstinacy than in a thing that is reasonable; and when any of the aristocratic party endeavoured to shew them the ridicule attached to an oath

* A plan was made for removing so much earth, that no ordinary exertion could accomplish it in the time; all the people of Paris, therefore, assisted, and the king, to shew his willingness to please the people, went there one day to wheel a few barrowfuls of earth. The people sang, laughed, danced, and worked, till they had converted a beautiful green field into an ugly unmeaning mass of mud. If it was meant to be as a theatre, it was not half elevated enough.

of fidelity to a non-entity, they vindicated themselves with all the warmth of wounded pride, by saying, that the spirit of the constitution was known, though the constitution itself did not then exist; besides, that they run no risk in committing themselves by adopting the work of the philosophical representatives of the nation.

This was a very great point accomplished; and by it the new order of things had acquired a greater degree of solidity. The fœderates had been feasted by the Parisians, and all of them were charmed with the eloquence and patriotism of the leading deputies of the assembly; these carried back to their provinces enthusiasm and adoration for the new system, but the Parisian Jacobins failed in inspiring either hatred or contempt for the king and royal family. They had made many attempts before the fœderation to see whether a part of the ceremonies of that day should not be contrived so as to humiliate the king; they had publicly, though not formally, spoke of abolishing the title of king, and establishing some other in its place more consistent with his limited power, and with the philosophy of the nation.

The public prints, particularly that of Brissot, proposed, at all events, placing the president of the assembly upon a sort of throne, as the representative of the nation, and the king upon a seat
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immediately before the president, a few steps lower; but these plans were abandoned as soon as the moderation of the fœderates from the departments was perceived; for it was hinted by the royalists to the party of republicans, that the king might, perhaps, employ that occasion to make an appeal to the nation in his own favour, and so the tables effectually be turned against them; and it is certain, that the national guards and Jacobins of Paris were, during the stay of the fœderates, extremely moderate, and much more modest in their deportment, than either before or after that period. The projects of humiliating the king were adjourned till another year, and this moderation was very lucky for the Jacobins themselves, for it produced an appearance of harmony and peace that was well calculated to make individuals think, that the people at large approved completely of the revolution; so that the first end which the fœderation was intended to bring about was pretty nearly accomplished.

The assembly occupied itself without intermission during the stay of the fœderates in the capital, in discussing the most popular laws, so that an impression was conveyed to the provinces of the candour, philosophy, and patriotism, of the majority of the representatives.

As the plan during the whole of the revolution had uniformly been to lead the people into measures which they did not properly comprehend, and to bind them to support whatever was done; it is unnecessary to discuss seriously the question of whether the oath taken by men who were not appointed either to make or confirm laws, was binding upon their fellow citizens, who had only sent them to partake of a public rejoicing, and to testify their pleasure at the prospect of being happy and free? and this inquiry is the less necessary, that insurrection being a right, and the people having the power of changing the laws and constitution at will, oaths of obedience and attachment to any particular order of things were inconsistent with the fundamental creed of the revolutionists.

We have not yet considered a main article in the constitution, which conferred upon the king what they called a *suspensive veto*, or a right of refusing his sanction to any legislative act, until two successive assemblies should have insisted upon the sanction, which then could be no longer withheld. A *suspensive veto* was of no importance to an imprisoned king, nor would an absolute *veto* have been of any greater utility. Had the reformers of France paid any regard to example, they would have allowed the king the liberty of refusing his sanction altogether as in England; or had they considered, that a king
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who has no share of legislative authority, is nothing more than a simple agent, and that therefore their successors would be left without controul, they certainly would not have arranged the matter as they did ; but whether it was done from ignorance, or with a design to render the king unpopular, they put the useless and dangerous suspensive power in his hand ; it would have been much better to have given him no power at all, because this might be very badly employed by a bad king, and opened evidently a door for a misunderstanding between him and the assembly, in which the nation could not fail to take part with one or the other.

The king, on his side, was extremely ill advised, when he made use of this mock power, which was employed as the chief means of rendering him odious to the people. It was the use of this power that in the end afforded a pretext for the people to enter the palace with violence. The *vêto*, a word that the people did not understand, was used as a sort of term of reproach and contempt ; the king was contemptuously called Monsieur Vêto, the queen Madame Vêto, thereby giving it to be understood, that they two alone stood between the people and that happiness which the representatives intended for them.

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The fœderation had been looked upon by a great number of persons who now began to wish for the restoration of law and order, as a sort of term to the revolution, or at least as preceding the term of it a little time ; and when they found that it was by no means advanced, but that the reign of disorder and confusion increased, they began to lose patience, and the assembly turned the anger, which naturally attends impatience, perpetually against the king and his ministers. It is perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to the happiness of a people, who are governed by large assemblies, that the attention is in general all given to one side of the question, and refused to the other. The ministers could never obtain any attention to their remonstrances and complaints, when they alledged their want of power to do good, and to put the law in force. The nation and the assembly were equally deaf to all their complaints, and it required but very little foresight to be persuaded that neither king nor veto would long exist among such a people, and with such representatives.

The assembly was now regularly divided into a right side and a left side, taking their names from being on the right and left of the president ; the right side was composed of aristocrats, as they called them, and the left of democrats ; there were a number of persons who called themselves impar-

impartials, or moderates, who placed themselves in general between the two, but who were considered as being aristocrats.

Those who were on the left side, were almost all members of the Jacobin club, and were by far the most numerous, as well as the most vigorous and energetic.

This vigour and energy of character, so remarkable in the Jacobins, deserves to be examined; it probably arose from a combination of causes, one of which was, that they were perpetually employed in attacking, and their enemies in defending. That men who go to extremes in their opinions, are never retarded in their operations by reasoning, which makes men balance, hesitate, and delay; but, above all, as destruction was their work, and anarchy their means, expedition and promptitude were easy and necessary. The new men who had nothing before the revolution, had all one object, which was to get something; but those who had the property to protect, had not all the same sort of property to take care of; and hence naturally arose delay, and want of unity and action.

The clergy, proprietors of land, and monied men drawing their revenues from the employment of capital, had all different interests to a
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certain degree; and the Jacobin faction divided them still more, by making the one believe it might be saved at the expense of the other two. It is certain the two latter expected, as they expressed themselves, that the clergy would pay for the broken pots, and thus the sensation of self-interest was rendered predominant; in the place of which, men of property should all have made one common cause of it, and then they might very probably have made such a stand as would have kept their invaders within some sort of reasonable bounds.

The assembly decreed, that all places, such as that of members in the ancient parliament, notaries,* money-brokers, &c. &c. should be reimbursed in assignats, the prices which had, upon an average, been given for them; thus a whole phalanx of enemies were converted, if not into friends, at least into neutral powers, by having their whole, or the greatest part of their fortunes in a paper, that derived its whole value from the continuance of the revolution, and the sale of church lands. This was a very great stroke to the aristocratic party, and from that time the decline of its power became more rapid than ever, and the new government acquired a degree of solidity that secured it against all attacks from its open enemies.

* Conveyancing attornies.

The Jacobins were now proof against every thing but their own system, which carried with it the revolutionary principle, or in other words, the principle of self-destruction; for as it rendered every thing that possibly could be done, liable to be undone by violence; and as in a violent struggle, chance often determines the result, it was probable that some time or other, a party would arise who should explode this principle, and with it Jacobinism.

The remainder of the year 1790 was employed in spreading assignats more widely, in abolishing the traces of ancient government, humiliating the king, and persecuting the nobility in the provinces, most of whom, for fear of being destroyed, resorted to Paris, and some few began already to leave the kingdom, and join the Prince of Condé, who was on the opposite banks of the Rhine, on the frontier of Alsace.

M. Necker had been teased and ill treated by those deputies, who were chosen by the assembly to inspect the national accounts, and particularly by that same M. Camus who was since then delivered up by Dumourier, whom he came to arrest; so that being tired with writing perpetually to the assembly for more assignats, and of being taken rudely to task for their employment, he thought proper to resign and leave the kingdom. His re-

signation cost the king, whom he had ruined, some regret, but occasioned great joy to the assembly, which he had so greatly contributed to raise up, and the people, of whom he had so long been the idol, were not at the pains either to testify pleasure or concern at his departure ; though if there was any general emotion, it was rather that of satisfaction than of regret.*

Thus departed the principal cause of all the troubles that had for fourteen months desolated France ; it is equally impossible to pity him, or to excuse his enemies. He had fully shewn by his conduct, that his motives for changing the form of government in the kingdom, were personal and not patriotic ; and they, on the other hand, must have been very sensible that the revolution had obligations to him of the most serious nature, and that they would have acted only as gratitude,

* M. Necker had a regular passport, but the Jacobin club, who wished to humiliate and torment him once more, sent orders to have him stopped and searched at the small municipality of Darcy-sur-Aube, where the mob wanted to put him and his wife to the lantern. The scene was very curious. The people on the outside of the inn were calling out, to the lamp-post, to the lamp-post ; while those within who were employed in searching his trunks were crying out, stop a little, we have not yet found any suspected papers, when we do, we shall let you know. Long live the nation ! long live liberty ! This scene continued almost all night, and it was not until express orders came from the assembly that he was allowed to proceed.

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dictated in shewing some sort of regret, and paying some honourable tribute to the father of the revolution.

During the summer of 1790, the king had been permitted to spend the greatest portion of his time at St. Cloud, a small palace about six miles from Paris, where he was guarded by the national troops as usual, and this contributed not a little to alleviate the personal inconveniency resulting to him and his family from being prisoners; it likewise prevented the assembly from having occasion to torment and insult him so frequently as during his stay in Paris.

In the course of proceeding in framing the constitution, at which a M. Target, an advocate of but small merit in Paris, worked indefatigably, it was proposed to alienate the royal domains, and allow the king a certain sum as a civil list. The assembly desired the king to name a sum himself, but he was for once aware of the snare that was laid, and refused to do it. The assembly then fixed it at twenty-four millions, or a million sterling,* with which, had other arrangements been

* That it was only a snare laid, is evident, by the future conduct of the assembly, which repeatedly, and without any ceremony, reduced the sum by assigning payment of guards, taxes, and many other expenses out of it, from all of which by the first grant it was free.

solid and durable, and the people happy, the king certainly would have found himself more contented than when he had an unlimited power of disposing of all the revenues of the kingdom.

During the operations of this year, that of reimbursing such persons as had places, was one of the most advantageous to the members who had ruled in the assembly. Mirabeau, on account of his known abilities, and his no less notorious private character, was applied to without hesitation by those who had protection to solicit; it was said, but not proved, that the civil list paid him a large sum monthly, and that the directors of the bank paid him a very large sum, when their affairs were in a state of liquidation.* Though these assertions want proof, it is not necessary to resort to any to be convinced that Mirabeau accepted bribes; as from being in a state of abject

* In November 1789, bills of Mirabeau's were handed about to be discounted among money-lenders; there were four on Le Fay, the bookseller, of 4000 livres each, making in all about 700l. sterling. In 1790, he bought a great part of his father's library, which was one of the best in France; he bought almost all the library of the celebrated Buffon; and besides that, the house of M. de Fleffes, who had been beheaded the first day of the revolution. He had likewise agents at all the sales of books, or rarities at the hotel de Bullion, and must have laid out at least 50,000l. sterling, besides his expenses, which were not of the most economical nature. His salary was fifteen shillings per day during this period!! Let those who admire such patriots think of this.

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want, he had become a wealthy man, living in great style, and purchasing property of every sort. M. d'André, the Lameths, Barnave, and numbers of others, grew rich also. The Jacobin agents who were not in the assembly, imitated the same example ; so that on all hands property was veering about from one side to the other.

Mirabeau began to be less decided and less desperate as he grew rich ; the more violent Jacobins began then to accuse him of being a moderate man ; it would have been much less dangerous for him to have been accused of murder and robbery, and it was upon the first appearance of popular opinion turning against him, that he exclaimed with his usual commanding tone of voice, *I know that it is but one step from the capitol to the Tarpeian rock.** As the idle the people, who called themselves the nation, and who attended round the hall of the assembly, to sway the decrees and mal-treat the members who did not vote as they wished, began to dislike the falling off that was perceivable in their favourite, it was no wonder if he began to think of the Tarpeian

* So much were people of that party persuaded by this time of the nature of popular favour, that Mirabeau's friends would tell him in jest that he would certainly be hanged. He is said once to have answered, *oui, je sçai q'uil faut ou que j'étouffe la revolution, ou la revolution m'étouffera.* But it is not certain that he did say so.

rock, and it was no wonder if his enemies began to be more bold.*

Mirabeau, whose penetration and audacity were equal, perceiving that the faction of the Lameths, Barnave, Petion, Robespierre, &c. were going farther than he wished, signified, without naming any names however, that he would, with a relentless severity, pursue the factious, whoever they might be; he was taken ill a few days after very suddenly, and in a manner that induced many people to suspect that he was poisoned.

The people of Paris are sufficiently apt to testify immoderate joy at events, but here they testified very evident marks of anxiety and grief. At the end of the fourth day, Mirabeau was no more, and the whole of that immense city seemed to mourn like a family that had lost its father; even the royalists were sorry,† and many of them entertained

* Marat had long been the enemy of Mirabeau; he had proposed in his paper to hang one third of the assembly, and to broil Mirabeau on a gridion, as being the greatest traitor amongst them. It is impossible to conceive the various interests and plans of these revolutionists; they were all friends when it was to pull down any part of the old government, but that done, they all wished each other hanged.

† There are many reasons for thinking that Mirabeau was poisoned, and though sixty surgeons were chosen from the different sections

tertaind the belief long after, that if Mirabeau had lived, the revolution would have taken a more mild and favourable turn.

There is not a doubt but that the king and the court had more confidence in Mirabeau's intentions and conduct, than in that of the other popular leaders. The assembly evidently lost in energy and in weight with the public when this extraordinary man was no more ; they had stiled him the coachman of the assembly, and a few members excepted, all confessed his superior talents for guiding the deliberations. The funeral of Mirabeau was such as have seldom been seen, the whole assembly, the king's ministers, every public man, and the whole of the national guard, assisted in the ceremony, at which all the inhabitants of Paris were present.

It is certainly a mistake to think that Mirabeau, or any other man, could have stemmed the tide

of the passions of Paris, and declared that he died a natural death, yet that by no means is any evidence ; few of those surgeons approached the body to examine it minutely, as they themselves confessed, and there was a mob of above one hundred thousand persons assembled in the neighbouring streets to know the result, and vowing vengeance if he was found to have been carried off by unfair means. Against whom this vengeance was meant, nobody knew, it was not therefore to be expected that the surgeons would venture to declare their opinion, even if they had found marks of a violent death.

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of insurrection and revolution which had been let loose by the invasion of power and of property. To the men who had let it loose may with great propriety and truth be applied the sublime description given by the immortal Milton in his *Paradise Lost*:

————— She open'd, but to shut
 Excell'd her power; the gates wide open stood,
 That with extended wings a banner'd host
 Under spread ensigns marching might pass through
 With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
 So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
 Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame,
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear,
 The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,
 Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
 And time and place are lost; where eldest night,
 And chaos, ancestors of nature, hold
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.

The different parties (the leaders excepted) began now to look around and to observe into what an immense ocean of anarchy they had launched the kingdom. Disorder increased fast, and the constitution advanced but slowly, and it already became pretty evident, that there would be still greater difficulty in putting it in execution than in making it. The French nation, extremely impatient, began to demand and expect that happiness which had been so often promised and always delayed.

Two methods of averting the storm were used; the one, to torment the king, and render him odious; the other, to make a new sacrifice to the people of Paris.

The Jacobin club determined not to permit his Majesty to go to St. Cloud this summer, under pretext of his wanting to escape; and the assembly decreed that all goods, and in particular the necessaries of life, such as wine, poultry, and garden-stuffs, which hitherto paid a very high duty on entering Paris, should pay no duty after the first of May following.

The king, wishing to pass the Easter holidays in the country, was stopped by a furious mob after he got into his carriage; and, after being detained more than an hour, and hearing every insulting expression applied to himself and the queen, in the presence of an armed guard and *Monf. la Fayette* at their head, was obliged to return to the palace. This seems to have been the beginning of that hard treatment by which his enemies forced him shortly after to abandon his capital, from a conviction, that, as he did neither possess their affection nor confidence, nor power to have himself respected, he could never fulfil the duties, or preserve the dignity of a king. We shall have occasion to shew that, whatever, or whoever, may have actually been the immediate

mediate cause of his departure, there are many reasons for thinking that it was rather the project of his enemies than of his friends.

During the latter part of the year 1790 the revolution had marched with a more peaceable step than either before or after. The new masters of France were occupied with consolidating their fabric, and the people had been tolerably peaceable, as their patience was not quite exhausted, for it had been industriously spread abroad that two years were necessary for a revolution, and that in two years the assembly should be renewed.

The emissaries of the Jacobins on their part had been very actively employed in seducing to their party the remainder of the regular troops that had continued faithful, not to their king, for there was no question of that, but to their officers, and to their duty as soldiers. They had been almost every where successful, and it is scarcely worth while to mention the obstacles they had met with, nor the disturbances which they occasioned. When so great a nation is let loose from obedience to the laws, tumults and disorders are the natural consequence, and it is not of any particular importance to examine them. The general outlines of anarchy, and the actions of the main actors, are all that can be traced; for every town in France having become an executing and deliberating

berating government, there is no possibility of entering into any details of the particulars. The riot at Nancy, the disturbances at Montauban, at Marseilles and Bourdeaux, were only repetitions of the same things that were passing so often in Paris; for, though the circumstances of time and place were different, the causes and the consequences were the same. They arose every where, from the general spirit of insurrection excited by the clubs, which were now called popular societies, and they all forwarded the cause of anarchy, and the destruction of whatever yet remained of order.

The moderate party had long endeavoured to establish societies to counteract that of the Jacobins; and they had held meetings at a convent of Fuillants, so that they, as well as the Jacobins, were named after the place of their assembly. M. La Fayette was some time a Fuillant, the Count de Clermont Tonnere, and many of those persons who in the beginning had been very active in the insurrection; but these Fuillants were but a bad copy of a bold original: they constituted themselves into a club in imitation of their rivals, but they wanted the affiliations which was the great thing in which its importance consisted. They reasoned calmly and coldly, and inspired no interest any where, or on any occasion. Men of sense were at a loss to conceive,

as they had patronized insurrection, and maintained the perpetual rights of the people to change the government, what reason they could have for differing with the Jacobins; and every frank royalist owned that the Jacobin was the more respectable and most consistent character of the two. Ambition and the desire of reigning, which all could not do in one society, was considered by some as the cause; others said that the Fuillants had repented; and others again that they approved of the principles of the Jacobins, but disapproved of their consequences; and certain it is, that the Fuillants themselves could never give any satisfactory cause for their secession from the mother club.

The Jacobins despised such milk and water rivals too much to set seriously about crushing them, for there was little danger from men who had neither been faithful to their king, nor to the bill of rights which they had themselves decreed.

Amongst those who never let pass an occasion of defending the throne, the altar, and the nobility, there were two men particularly distinguished; M. l'Abbé Maury and M. de Cazalés; and, perhaps, the circumstance that is the most honourable to the Parisians is, that during the whole of the two years that they remained amongst them, though they had been perpetually
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blamed, and sometimes insulted, they never received any serious injury; they even were esteemed personally by vast numbers of the opposite party, while those who were perpetually balancing from side to side were almost universally despised.

In revolutions nothing is so useful as a decided character, and a firm mode of action; those who want that, never will succeed, the others sometimes may. *Boldness, firmness, and energy*—These are the qualifications for a revolutionist: those who want to crush revolutions, must to these three join *a love of justice and of their country*, and the victory will be decided in favour of him who has the first blow. It is impossible to succeed in revolting if the rulers of a country have the qualities above mentioned, where the government is already regularly established; accordingly, we never read in history of any revolt being effectually made, except under weak, undecisive, or bad rulers.

The Jacobins amused themselves with raising the populace, and making them torment the Feuillants, who were at last obliged to abandon their meetings; and neither any party, nor the public cause, suffered any thing by the dispersion of such feeble, undetermined, non-descript sort of men, who were incapable either of inspiring any interest or doing any service to their fellow citizens.

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When the assembly had recovered a little from that stupid inactivity in which it remained several weeks, or, rather, when it had begun to adopt a plan of action, which with Mirabeau it had entirely lost, it turned with fury upon the clergy. It would have been natural to suppose that, having abolished tythes, and reduced their livings to the sums which the greatest enemy of the clergy could not regard as too great,* it was to be considered as an affair finished; but now it began to appear that the *persecution* of that order was in view; the sales of church lands went on rapidly, and the ancient possessors submitted with more resignation than could have been in such a case expected; but, under the plausible, though insidious name of organising the civil state of the clergy, they made it one condition, that all who enjoyed livings in the church, should take an oath that was thought to be inconsistent with the supremacy of the Church of Rome.

However men who had no religion might laugh at this, as the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff is one of the tenets of the Roman Catholic faith; every reasonable man, let his own persuasion be what it may, will consider it as the most unexampled degree of barbarity and injustice to pro-

* A bishop had 12,000 livres, or 500l. a year; the country curates had 50l. those in towns something more, and other clergy in proportion.

pose such a sacrifice : it seems to be equivalent to the ceremony of trampling upon the cross, submitted to by those who wish to trade with the inhabitants of Japan, and which British merchants have never consented to do. It is in vain in such cases to remark, that to trample on a piece of wood is an indifferent matter, if the conscience of the man who is to trample on it is not reconciled to the action ; but the inhabitant of Japan only proposes this condition to those who want to gain by dealing with him, he does not insist upon any person either doing it or starving ; for such was the alternative left to the clergy of France—one of the most cruel and most unjust that ever was proposed to any set of men.

The consequence of this was, that the clergy who had abandoned their temporal affairs to the tide of things, made here a positive stand and refused obedience, as the king also refused his sanction to the decree. This ended, like all the other contests, by a forced sanction being exacted from his Majesty, and the decree being ordered to be put rigorously in execution.

Greatly to the honour of the clergy of France, a very small number took the oath required, and were therefore obliged to quit their livings and their parishes, and to retire upon pensions which every

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one, even at the time, was fully persuaded would never be paid.

M. Rabaut, a Calvinist and writer of a history of this period, treats the scruples of the clergy as being merely on purpose to excite a schism in the church and confusion in the nation; we cannot, in justice, let this assertion pass without refutation. Without entering into the question as Roman Catholics, let us enter into it as men, and we shall at once be convinced, that this oath must have appeared a matter of great importance to the members of the church, otherwise they would not have abandoned every thing in order to avoid taking it. The enemies of the clergy themselves, who accuse that body of too great an attachment to its temporal welfare, must allow the force of this argument in its whole extent. As to the fact, that penury and want stared the nonjurors in the face, the circumstance is yet recent, and many persons living who remember that it was the general opinion at the time in France, that they never would be punctually paid, and that they soon would cease to be paid at all.

There was even a strong reason for thinking, that to pay the nonjuring clergy would be impossible, and this was no other, than that there existed no fund from which they could be paid, as the sales of the church lands went to pay debts,

and the salaries of the officiating clergy amounted to more than the interest of the money arising from those sales.*

If any thing can add to these arguments, in themselves sufficiently conclusive, it is the absurd rumour spread abroad by the Jacobins at the time, that the clergy wished to make a counter-revolution, and that they wished to gain over the people to their side. Now, if this was the case, the clergy should have remained in their parishes where they had the means of operating upon the minds of the people at large, and not have condemned themselves to inactivity, and to a total incapacity of doing any thing of the sort, by abandoning their functions.

This allegation of the levelling party was exactly of a piece with those accusations brought against the nobility in the Jacobin club, and even in the assembly, where they were said to have burned their own castles in order to excite counter-revolution. It is difficult to suppose men capable of accusing others of such ridiculous improbabilities, but it is altogether inconceivable, that any people should be so de-

* The seizing the lands of the clergy only served as a pretext for creating the assignats, for, in fact, the nation lost money by selling those lands, and giving the clergy the salaries which they had decreed. This matter has been sufficiently examined and proved by different writers at the time.

praved, or so ignorant, as to give any credit to such assertions.

The people, in many parts of France, saw their conscientious curates depart with regret; in others, the Jacobin emissaries chased them from their parishes with much mockery and insult; but through the whole kingdom, all classes of men, from the highest to the lowest, who retained any sentiment of religion and justice, approved of the conduct, and lamented the lot of those men, who, from attachment to their duty (even if that attachment should be founded on mistake) laid themselves open to all the inconveniences of indigence and want.

We cannot leave this subject without observing, that the regular plan laid for degrading religion, and by degrees abolishing it altogether, was a quite new thing in the history of mankind; we have never read of one mode of faith being pulled down, except for the purpose of establishing another; but here the plan seems to have been to destroy all religion, and leave the people without any; and if we have any doubt of its being then intended, we may clear that up by examining the conduct of the Abbé Seyeyes, of Pétion, of Robespierre, &c. since that time.

The firmness of the high clergy was such in this case, that none of the bishops could be found to ordain

dain the new intruders, and that two men who were bishops *in partibus*, that is, who had no bishoprics, and were a sort of pensioners on the Church of Rome, were employed for that purpose.

It is some consolation to reasonable men, whatever their mode of faith may be, to think, that the lot of those who rendered this cruel and unjust decree, and of the unprincipled intruders who occupied the place of those who were thus dismissed, has been still more disastrous than that of the men whom they had sacrificed. Many of the intruders finished by revoking the oath they had taken, and all of them were despised. Numbers have, on various pretexts, been put to death, or sent out of the country, and not one of them has had the satisfaction of approving of his own conduct.

From the time that this decree was rendered, even the appearance of unity and concord that had been preserved hitherto was at an end; it was evident to every one, that this severe and unjust order tended to stir up dissension, and did not, like other decrees, put any money into the treasury of the nation; on the contrary, it took a great deal out, by the pensions that were to be paid to the nonjurors; or if those pensions should cease to be paid, it would be a breach of faith that could not but be attended with disgrace.

The nation, (that is to say, the populace, which went by that name, and which actually ruled, though cloathed in rags and filth) considered itself as being extremely rich, and was become so œconomical and avaricious, that * if this regulation about the clergy had offered any profit, it would have had many advocates, but it offered none, and, of consequence, was the most unpopular act the assembly had yet passed.

During this time a division manufactured itself amongst the national guards of Paris. Santerre, a brewer in the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, and who commanded a division in that quarter, had endeavoured to supplant La Fayette in the good graces of the people. This was a matter of no small importance, for it was from the Fauxbourg St. An-

* One of the king's servants, or carriages, could not pass without *the nation* saying, that it was a pity and a shame that their blood and treasure should support such luxury. It was proposed, that M. Bailly, the once favourite of the people, and still the mayor, should not be allowed appointments sufficient to keep a carriage, but that he should walk on foot. In the public papers it was proposed to abolish all carriages in towns, and to oblige people either to walk or to go on horseback. The order of procession proposed was, that those on horses should walk at a slow pace and follow in a straight line; nobody but a doctor or a surgeon was to be permitted to trot their horses in the street. We may easily judge, when such plans were seriously proposed and discussed, though not adopted, to what an extravagant pitch the ignorance and folly of a people styling themselves free was carried.

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toine, which was peopled only with poor workmen, that those mobs had come that were so formidable to the aristocrats, and as the revolution advanced, the effeminate manners of La Fayette ceased to be so popular as formerly; a coarse, rough brewer seemed more fit for the confidence of men, whose professed aim was to level all distinctions; add to this, that Santerre was the abler of the two, he was hearty in the cause of anarchy; whereas La Fayette was become moderate, and, to complete his nothingness, was a Feuillant.

A riot, occasioned under the pretext of destroying what remained of the Palace of Vincennes, which, being uninhabitable on account of its ruinous state, had been employed for keeping state prisoners, in the same manner as the Bastille, served to shew the two parties in their true colours. La Fayette, the superior officer, opposed himself to the demolition, and Santerre opposed himself to La Fayette, until seeing that he had only a small party to support him, he was prudent enough to give way. La Fayette returned to Paris,* and being told, that a number of gentlemen were in the palace of the Thuilleries, (where they had actually gone, thinking that the mob might come there) and of gentle-

* Vincennes is but about a mile distant.

men whose attachment to the person of his majesty was not equivocal, he hastened to vent his spleen upon them. The few friends that yet remained attached to the king were beat and kicked, and a few of them imprisoned, without any appearance of their having committed any fault. The common report was, that they were armed with poignards of a particular form,* but that was never credited for a moment, though it served as an opportunity for distinguishing the king's friends in future by the title of knights of the dagger, the word aristocrat having lost something of its force.

It was now become a sufficient reason for being suspected and ill treated, if any one seemed to

* The fear of poignards was so great about this time, that a sword cutler came to the municipality in order to declare, that he had orders to make a dagger, the handle of which was to be ornamented with false diamonds; that it was for a lady, and that, probably, it might be for the queen. This was a very grave affair. He was told to finish the dagger, and give notice to have the person who came for it arrested. All this was done in the most serious manner, for the poignard was no common weapon, it had a contrivance in the handle to receive the steel, which slipped back the moment the point was pressed against any thing, and this was thought a very dangerous contrivance. The lady who had commanded it was a lover of the theatre, and was to perform on a private stage, a part in which self-murder was to be perpetrated. The construction of the dagger might have unriddled all this, but fear is the blindest of all leaders.

have a connection with a nonjuring priest; and the king had great odium thrown upon him on this account.

The departure of the two aunts of the king, who were too old to conform to the new regulations in point of religion, and who went suddenly off to Rome, afforded great matter of complaint against his majesty, who was literally in the situation of the lamb in the fable, when accused by a wolf for troubling the water: it was the same thing to his accusers, whether this unfortunate prince had a good reason to give for his conduct or not, the blame was laid to him all the same, and certainly without considering, whether a king, who was accustomed to rule, feels more than another man or not, his situation was such as no man that had not crimes to reproach himself with could have envied.

To add to the pain which daily mortification must have occasioned, the constitution, so far as it was advanced, offered only a bizar jumble of principles and regulations, which promised nothing but more anarchy and more confusion.

As it was then generally believed, that the king was a careless, easy, and ill-informed man, it was supposed, that he was either ignorant of or indifferent to the prospect before him; but his
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conduct since, when in prison and alone, where there could be no deception, has proved, that he was by no means the man they thought. Having so completely cleared up this point himself, it would be unnecessary to enter upon it; and we must remain convinced, that few men in his kingdom had studied the decrees rendered by the assembly more profoundly than himself, nor foresaw the evil consequences more clearly.* He began, therefore, to be convinced, that there was no hope of a good issue to the affairs, and through the entreaties of his friends and ill-treatment of his enemies, was at last induced to endeavour to make his escape. The circumstances with which this unfortunate journey were attended are universally known, but the particular causes of it are concealed, and probably will continue so till an end is put to the present war, when the truth may perhaps come out.

There are three opinions on the subject respecting its cause; one is, that the royal family and the emigrants without the kingdom had imagined this mode of raising a civil war. Another is, that the moderate party, with La Fayette

* After the constitution was accepted, the king had always by him a copy of the whole, and it frequently fell to his lot to explain to the assembly that succeeded, decrees which they did not properly understand.

at their head, let the king go with an intention to stop him on his journey, and by getting him entirely under their power, be able thereby to triumph over the more violent Jacobins. The third is, that the more violent Jacobins had persecuted him by hindering him from going to the country that summer, and perpetually harraffing him with messages, on purpose to induce him to depart, with a design to convert France into a republic.

It would be wasting time uselessly to attempt settling this point, because the different facts on which the different opinions are supported, are not proved. La Fayette's enemies maintain that it was his plan, that he knew of their departure, and had determined beforehand where they were to be stopped. La Fayette had many faults, and was guilty of many inexcusable pieces of cool deceit; but without pretending to determine the point positively, we may safely acquit him of this until some real proof is brought against him, as it is very improbable; he run personally a great risk, as his plan might have failed, and even the first moment of popular fury might have been fatal to the man who had answered with his life for the king's person. It is still more unlikely that the violent Jacobins could have laid the plan, for the nation was by no means ready for such an experiment; besides, it was impossible for them to calculate at all about its success, as they had
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no means of approaching his person to give him council, as none of their party guarded him, and as the circumstance of the king's being absent, would be the signal for all the royalists in the nation assembling round his person, and occasioning a civil and foreign war both at once.

Upon the whole, it seems most probable that this journey was the plan of the royalists, and that it failed through mismanagement. On the morning of the 21st of June, the royal family was found to be missing from the palace of the Thuilleries, and Monsieur, the king's elder brother, from the palace of the Luxemburg. Nothing could equal the astonishment and stupid sort of wonder displayed by the Parisians in the first part of that day. They had affected such a sovereign contempt for the king's understanding, that their pride was prodigiously mortified by an escape, of which nobody could give the least information. The total ignorance of the manner, as well as of the course which he had taken, mixed with the anxiety as to what might be the consequences, produced a stupid state of inactivity, which was afterwards represented as majestic silence and resolution.

The assembly, however, acted upon this occasion with more than their usual moderation and wisdom. The ministers were sent for, and it was deter-

determined to keep things peaceable till the event of the escape should become known.

Towards evening, the people began to recover a little from the blow, and employed themselves in effacing the name and arms of the king, and the word royal from all the sign posts and public buildings where it yet remained. The people were so little prepared for a republic, that the conversation amongst the groups in the Palais Royal, and round the assembly, run upon the propriety of offering the throne to the Duke of York; that, said they, would change the dynasty, and unite France to England, which would be exchanging the family compact with Spain, for a far better one with England.* Paris continued in a kind of sullen but impatient silence till the fourth day, when news came that the king was stopt at Varennes, it was then that all countenances changed, and that the people began to vent themselves in abusive language. The chief movement seemed to be occasioned by the pleasure which they expected from seeing a king, who had outwitted them, humbled and brought back a captive.

The enemies of royalty had now another triumph, which they did not long delay turning to

* As soon as any new word was employed by the members of the assembly, it was repeated perpetually in the groups.

advantage. The king had unequivocally shewn himself to be the enemy of the constitution ; and it is certain, after what had passed, no man who had common sense could ever expect a happy issue to the affairs. The step which the king had taken, was of itself a proof that he did not give his consent to the change of government that had taken place ; but that there might be no doubt on that head, he had left a long declaration, all written with his own hand, in which he criticised very severely, and disapproved very decidedly of the plan of government. People were now convinced that the king was capable of profound dissimulation, and from that day forward little discernment was necessary to see that either the king or the new order of things must fall before any very distant period.

This flight of the royal family must be allowed to have been contrary to many professions which the king had made, and as such blameable, but it must at the same time be allowed that his enemies were to be blamed in a much greater degree. Long before the time of the king's flight, he had only acted a passive part ; it was for the great, majestic assembly therefore (as a king was a part of their constitution) to have rendered him its friend by good usage, and by allowing him some degree of personal ease and comfort ; but like those savages who amuse themselves in mutilating and degrading

grading a fallen enemy, this assembly, which professed virtue and philosophy, was perpetually employed in vexing and humiliating the king; all the democratic journalists, the democratic groups, and all the clubs in the kingdom, were employed in rendering the king and kingly power odious and contemptible, for which conduct it will be very difficult to assign a good reason, or to furnish a good excuse.

The king, supposing him only to have been the first public functionary, as they affected to call him, still he ought to have met with great respect and implicit obedience, when he did not exceed his powers, and the assembly ought to have set the first example of honouring and respecting the chief magistrate of the nation. As it so happened that the king never exceeded the authority given to him, it is hard to say whether the injustice or the imprudence of this conduct towards him was the greater, particularly as a sort of respect, bordering upon idolatry,* was shewn to every other of the constituted authorities.

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* In a new piece produced on one of the theatres, a municipal officer was made to appear with the three-coloured echarpe over his shoulders, and the people were offended that the sacred and constitutional colours should be degraded by decorating an actor on the stage. This happened among a people who had often seen the Saviour, and sometimes the Creator of the world, represented by an actor on a public stage, and who never, during

This circumstance, which so naturally attracts our attention upon the present occasion, may perhaps justly be considered as a proof that the reigning party of that time wished to prepare the French people for a republic; and if they did so, it is certain the method they took was the most likely to succeed of any that could be adopted. The king had been allowed, as we before said, a suspensive veto, which gave him a privilege more invidious than useful, and he was obliged, when he did sanction a law, to do it without making any observation or requesting any alteration. The power granted to all kings, and which is so necessary to reside somewhere, of pardoning criminals in particular cases, was refused to this unfortunate sovereign, upon whom all the responsibility and odium of executive government was thrown, without his being permitted to enjoy either the honours or the privileges that are equally necessary for the governor and the governed.

The philosophers of the revolution talked much much of the rights of man, and of liberty; did

ring the times of the most violent royalism, nor when religion had its greatest power, thought there was any impropriety in representing kings and priests in the theatre. Kings and priests have often too been turned into ridicule on the stage, but the municipal officer only appeared as such, without the least attempt to expose him, either as an object of hatred or of contempt.

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they think then that they had a power to deprive their king of all his rights as an individual? They might claim, perhaps, with some appearance of right, the power of cashiering him, as they expressed it; but they should have said in this case, as they said on so many others, that though he was a king, he was likewise *a man*, and that nothing but crimes committed by himself could take away from him any of his natural rights; as being a man, he should therefore have got his free choice of being king, or refusing to be so; or at all events, if public good required that he should absolutely be king, he merited every sort of respect and good treatment as an individual, devoted innocently and against his will to be the slave of the nation.

If justice required this, policy required also that the chief magistrate, entrusted with the execution of the laws, should be loved and respected by those who were to obey, and it was even very essential to have him execute willingly, and with comfort to himself, the duties of the office into which he had been placed. It did not certainly require any great degree of justice, common sense, nor acuteness, to have seen all this, and as the assembly cannot be accused of wanting that last quality, it is more than probable that its real intention was to have a republic as soon as the people should fully have got over their ancient

prejudice in favour of kings. This seems to be more probable, that the men who at that time ruled, have been very active since royalty was abolished, and have never concealed their preference to a republican form of government.

It is beyond a doubt, that since the assembly and the other authorities had no power to make the law respected, by securing to the king that personal liberty which they had so formally decreed, he had a right to seek means of abdicating the throne by whatever method he could;* and this was the more lawful, as it had been decreed, that if the king absented himself without leave, and did not return when summoned, he by that act abdicated his crown. Now by taking this decree in the sense that the king had a right to take it, if he chose, it implies fairly, that if the king thinks proper to abdicate, he may do so by going away out of the kingdom, or to any distance farther than sixty miles, and refusing to return.

Such, as to the right of the matter, must be the reasonings of every one, but it must be confessed,

* The king was permitted to travel to any distance, not exceeding sixty miles from the capital, or the national assembly, and this decree was previous to his being forced by the populace to return to his palace, when he only intended going to St. Cloud, six miles distant, and that under a guard of armed citizens.

that nothing could be so unfortunate as the disposition of the king to go away, and that of the assembly to force him to return, as it rendered confidence in future impossible to be maintained, and without that a king can never be useful in any free country.

The circumstances of the king's return are well known to all, we shall therefore pass over them to the consequences of this unfortunate journey.

The career of the democrats was impeded by this flight, although it might naturally have been expected to be accelerated. A momentary union took place between the royalists and the moderate party, who discovered their interests not to be very opposite to each other; and even many of the Jacobin club, and its admirers, having been struck with amazement and fear at the prospect of a decided civil war, which they had so narrowly escaped, determined to avoid those extremes which might be the occasion of bringing one on; even the ferocious Barnave was sensible of the necessity of adopting measures of greater moderation in future.* Petion, Robespierre, and

* Besides Barnave, Rabaut de St. Etienne, d'André, Thouret, Chapelier, and even the Abbé Seyeyes, were for moderation; every body knows that it was neither from respect nor attachment to the king that this could arise, it must, therefore, probably have been from an idea of necessity.

the Abbé Gregoire, as well as some other leaders of the Jacobin club, amongst whom Brissot must be mentioned, and Danton, wished to have embraced that opportunity of deposing the king, by trying him and finding him guilty ; however, the committee appointed for examining into the affair, declared that the king himself could not be tried, as he was inviolable, but that the authors and abettors of the project should be searched out and punished.

As it had been the ancient usage in France, that the declaration of the king or queen were to be received in the courts of justice, but that they could not be *interrogated*, the assembly and the king both were inclined to adopt this mode ; accordingly the king declared to a deputation that waited upon him for the purpose of receiving it, that having been continually insulted in Paris, without any redress being obtained, he had been under apprehensions for the lives of himself and his family ; that his intention had been to avoid danger by going to Montmedy, where he meant to have stopt to learn the real disposition and will of the nation, which he could not do as a prisoner in so turbulent a city as Paris. To this he added, that during the latter part of his journey he had been convinced of the unanimity of the people, and their desire to support the constitution, which he therefore would consider as the

national will, but upon which he could not give his own opinion until it should be completed.

With regard to the guilt of those who co-operated in the flight, he declared with firmness that it was his own action, that no one had prompted him to it, that they had only obeyed, and that therefore no person could be guilty on that head.

While the assembly was endeavouring to take moderate measures, the violent party in the clubs, both of the Jacobins and of another called the Cordeliers, where Marat and Danton were members, (and which was more violent than even that of the Jacobins) were making every effort to carry things to extremities. The groups in the Palais Royal were the same, and hand bills were circulated and posted up, demanding the judgment of the king. All the men who had suffered by the first revolution, and were afraid of a second, joined the moderate party; but the dregs of the people were firmly attached, as usual, to the cause of anarchy and revolt, so that there was every appearance of things being brought speedily to a serious contest.

Paris had been continually in a state of commotion from the 20th of June, till the middle of

July, whilst these questions had been agitated; and on the 17th of July, which happened to be a Sunday, a great crowd of people went to the altar of the fœderation, there to sign a paper (composed by Brissot, as it was generally believed) which they called a petition, but which was a remonstrance, followed by a declaration that they never would submit to be governed by Louis the Sixteenth.

This patriotic mob of petitioners began by hanging an invalid who had lost his leg, together with a hair dresser whom they found laying drunk or asleep under the altar. This was done upon the *pretence* of their being spies (for the *good populace* pay much more regard to severity than to justice in punishing) but more probably, as has so often been done since, in order to stir up the ferocious passions of the multitude, by the crime of murder recently committed.*

M. Bailly, La Fayette, and the national guards, were inclined to the moderate side, and they embraced this opportunity of attacking their enemies; martial law was proclaimed, and they marched in force against the mob. When arrived at the Champ de Mars, where they were assembled,

* The same thing was done on the morning of the 10th of August.

upon ordering the mob to disperse, the mayor and commandant were assailed with a volley of stones, which was returned by a discharge of musketry, without ball, only to intimidate the assailants, but without effect: the shower of stones continued, and was answered by a shower of bullets. The mob now run off in all directions, leaving about a dozen dead upon the field. The ring-leaders all escaped, and disappeared for a considerable time; Danton, for one, had been seen there on a white horse, and was one of the first to make his escape.

The assembly approved completely and heartily of the conduct of Bailly and La Fayette; and for once the assembly and the municipality of Paris joined in one interest, and had one triumph over the promoters of disorder. The Jacobins were humbled in Paris, at Birmingham, and in Switzerland, almost at the same moment;* and though their fall was but for a short period in France, it is to be attributed to this, that those who crushed the revolt, were the same men who had formerly headed it themselves, and who had

* This was the same week with the riots occasioned at Birmingham, by the celebration of the glorious revolution, and in the Pays de Vaud, where it had been celebrated likewise, and where some of the celebrators who had circulated incendiary hand bills, were taken into custody and carried to Berne to be tried.

been the first to preach up the sacredness of the duty of insurrection.

We see here one of the best occasions that the revolution has furnished for proving the falsity of the principles, and the villainy of the men who had themselves led the people to revolt two years before, and who now fired upon them for practising it, because it had continued too long. So thought Bailly and La Fayette now, but they did not think so when Berthier and Foulon were massacred; and so thought Brissot, two years after, when he found that insurrection was likely to be turned against his party. It is thus that the leaders of different factions consider what is right, to consist in what suits themselves; and insurrection may be added to insurrection, without a complaint, till it becomes inconvenient, and then it becomes a crime.

If men are too blind to see into the manœuvres and villainy of such practices, then we may bid adieu to all that instruction which history and experience can give. Never was conduct more uniformly selfish and villainous, than that of the leaders of French democracy; we see them perpetually holding up the general good as the main object in view, as the great end of society, and we as uniformly see them employing the multitude to advance their own private ends. We must pity

the multitudes which they mislead, and we must condemn-in the most decided and unequivocal terms all those cruel, selfish, ambitious, and hypocritical men, who ruined their own country before their deceit was found out, but whose practices and whose principles, it is to be hoped, are now sufficiently known, that other nations may be secure from a similar error.

The national assembly and the nation itself seemed to be frightened at the danger from which they had escaped, and it was determined to go on with and finish the whole constitutional act, and thereby secure the country from a similar risk on any future day.

CHAP. VIII.

Retrospect of what had been passing in the interior—Mobs, cruelties, and burning of castles—Industry flies when there is no security for persons and property—Affairs of St. Domingo—That island a prey to the different opinions of two factions—Contradictory decrees of the assembly concerning the men of colour, the blacks and the whites—Poverty and want of commerce in France—Efforts of the Jacobin emissaries in other countries—In England—At Liege—Brabant, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy—Emigration and appearance of hostilities—The general confusion determines the assembly to finish the constitution, which they resolve to do, and then to separate.

BEFORE we enter upon the conclusion of the constitutional act, it will be necessary to turn back to take a view of the different manœuvres that had been practised in the provinces of France, in the colonies in the West Indies, and in other countries of Europe; which, for the sake of not interrupting the relation of what was passing amongst the chiefs themselves, have been left behind.

The

The first persecution of the priests and nobles had begun in order to procure an exemption from tythes and feudal rights, as the opposition to the crown had been begun to procure liberty, but tythes were long ago abolished, and the noble, far from exacting obedience or money, was obliged to obey, and to submit to arbitrary contributions. A new mode must now be adopted of stirring up the people against them, and this was not neglected. Stories totally void of foundation were spread every where about the plans and plots of aristocrats, which word was substituted for that of royalist. The dearness of bread was attributed to them, and, however improbable it might be, there were not wanting thousands to give credit to that report.

It has been too evident, from the reports of the assembly ever since the beginning of the revolution to the present day, that order has never been established in the finances, nor in the distribution of justice. How far the country must fall back in so long a period, and how great the share of individual misery must be on that account, is not difficult to conceive. As the decrees of the assembly seemed calculated to render the people richer and more happy, and that they had, in fact, become poorer and more miserable, it was natural to attribute it to some other cause than the popular decrees of the assembly. As, however,
there

there was no other cause, none could be perceived, and therefore one was imagined. The nobles and the clergy, who could not be expected to be friends of a revolution by which they were ruined, were fixed upon as the latent cause of the public misfortunes, and this belief, like many others, became general, not because it was well supported by facts, but, because it became general seemed to need no facts to support it. In the national assembly, in all the democratical papers and clubs, the nobles and clergy were accused without any proofs, as being a matter of course, and that needed none; at the same time, when any circumstance that could be construed unfavourably for them took place, it was employed to augment the general fury; of this species was an unfortunate explosion of powder at the house of a member of the parliament of Besançon whilst he was giving a feast to a number of his neighbours; it was reported immediately, that this unfortunate man had blown up his house with design,* and a banditti, mostly composed of peasants in Franch-Comté, vented their revenge for this supposed treason, by actually burning and pillaging a number of gentlemen's country seats, not one of whom met with either protection or with indemnification from the governors of

* The falsity of this was immediately after recognised, and the whole let sleep when its fabricators began to find its effects too serious and likely to affect themselves.

France; from the leaders of that happy, that glorious revolution, which Dr. Priestley and his friends prefer to that of England; under which they obtained both.

Though the barbarities at that time exercised are now almost forgotten, on account of that terrible series of crimes with which they have been followed; yet they are, nevertheless, good specimens of democracy in its moderate moments, and as it has become so fashionable to expose the crimes and follies of kings, a few of the first essays of the common people may not be useless. They are taken from newspapers published at the time, and some of them from reports laid before the national assembly, and they are all of them to be found in the *Memoire de M. Lally Tollendal*, who was himself a friend to liberty at the beginning, but who, sooner than most others, saw and repented of the manner in which he and his colleagues in the assembly had fought after that inestimable blessing.

“ In Languedoc, M. de Barras was cut to
“ pieces in the presence of his wife, who was far
“ advanced in her pregnancy, and died with the
“ fright.

“ At Mans, M. de Montesson was shot, after
“ witnessing the murder of his father-in-law.

“ Ma-

“ Madame de Battenay was forced to give up
“ the title deeds of her estates by an enraged
“ mob, who menaced her with immediate death,
“ and held an ax over her head.

“ The title deeds of a gentleman were de-
“ manded of his steward, who refusing to de-
“ liver them, was carried to a fire, and his feet
“ were burnt off to oblige him to give them up.”

We almost think, that we are recounting the cruelties of the Spaniards upon the inhabitants of Mexico and Peru ; but no, the case was worse still. The followers of Cortez were but a set of adventuring freebooters, and had left their country to seek gold at any price. The disciples of modern philosophers acted thus with their neighbours, and in their own country, not from the hope of enriching themselves with gold but from revenge, which is certainly a still more detestable passion than avarice.

Such are a few of the instances of popular fury and injustice which France exhibited in a great number of different parts during the two first years of the revolution, and which the democratic writers do not attempt to deny, but which, they assert, were the acts of the aristocrats themselves, in order to bring on a counter-revolution. This assertion, though it gained credit amongst the
people

people of Paris, it would be an insult to the reader to offer to refute.*

On account of these excesses many of the ancient families saved themselves in Paris, and being almost deprived of revenues from their lands, the proprietors found themselves in a state little better than the clergy, and were induced from necessity, as well as from finding things perpetually getting worse, to encourage that emigration which has since been so fatal to their interests. It will be necessary, farther on, to examine into this emigration, and shew, that it was not a measure either of loyalty or prudence, as it was at first

* On the banks of the Soane, where the country is in general fertile, a country attorney forged an order from the king to destroy gentlemen's seats. He assembled a mob of about five thousand men, and, in the course of six or seven days, above seventy gentlemen's seats were burned down, and the churches and small towns were plundered. This armed mob was at last attacked and defeated by a sort of army raised by the gentlemen of the country with a considerable slaughter. Some of the banditti were legally tried and punished.

The mischiefs in other parts did not stop, and no attempts were made to punish them. The Chevalier d'Ambli was taken from his house, dragged naked through the village, his hair and eye-brows were then torn off; he was thrown upon a dunghill, whilst his tormentors, like Indian savages, were dancing round. M. de Monjustin, who had, with twenty-three other gentlemen, signed voluntarily a declaration very favourable to the people, was suspended for more than an hour over a well, while his enemies were disputing which sort of death he should suffer.

repre-

represented, nor a measure of blameable neglect and cowardice, as another party has since represented it. The emigration originated in the burnings and cruelties of which we have been speaking, and it was continued by causes of which we shall hereafter speak.

From those injustices and cruelties with which the people begun, at a very early period of the revolution, the bad effect of suddenly overturning established government was easily to be discovered. It might have been expected, that the assembly would, in consequence, have retarded the work of destruction, and have attempted to accelerate the institution and organization of the new government, but no such thing was attempted; and though the same horrors could not all the time continue, the destruction of forests where the wood was cut and burned, the non-payment of rents, and a very lawless and pillaging manner of living introduced and maintained itself in the whole of France, a few provinces excepted. This ruined the country, and rendered its inhabitants more poor and miserable than ever, while the towns were reduced by the expenses of guards, contributions of plate, under the name of patriotic gifts, the voluntary contribution *exacted by force* of one quarter of every one's revenue, but above all, by the immense circulation of assignats substituted for specie without any limit or measure.

sure. This gave the inhabitants the means of consuming without creating,* and not only did it do so, but, by the variation of the price of articles, gave room to that most ruinous sort of stock-jobbing, and so encouraged every kind of personal extravagance. Misery and the appearance of wealth increased at the same time; for though the prejudice against paper money was very strong and very general at first, the people began by degrees to consider as a real value a sign which procured them bread as easily as gold had formerly done; and the longer this continued the more did their confidence increase.

* One of the greatest evils of the assignats has been, that as they supplied the place of taxes, the nation has all this time been consuming its capital and not its revenue. When a man pays a sum to government, he expends and consumes less than his income amounts to by that sum, the expenses of government are therefore the savings of individuals, and the balance is kept up between the productive and consuming power of the nation; but when a nation contrives to substitute something else for taxes, then the consumption of the individual is equal to his production, (this is only speaking in a general sense, without considering such persons as are getting in debt or hoarding up money,) and the consumption of the nation in its public capacity is added to this, so that the total consumption exceeds the total production by a sum equal to the public expenses. It was thus that the influx of gold ruined Spain, and that whatever the device may be, a substitute for taxation will in the end ruin any country.

As property was not secure in France, where there was no law, and where every sort of value was represented by a sign that was perpetually varying, industry suffered greatly, and therefore the poverty and wretchedness of the country became greater than in the time of the farmers-general. Every article increased in price, and this to such a degree, that the abolition of duties paid on entering Paris did not sensibly diminish the price of the necessary articles of life. Formerly a bottle of wine, which cost 5d. English money in Paris, could be purchased without the gates at the low price of 2d.; when the duty was taken off, it was expected that the capital would enjoy a great advantage in the reduction of price; but it was only reduced from 6d. to which it had risen, to 5d. as it had originally been, and was soon after augmented to 7d.

If the French reformers were mistaken in the manner of rendering the people happy by good laws, they were no less so in the way of making them rich; security and order are the basis of industry, and industry of riches, without which there can be none.

At the same time that the true source of riches in the interior of the kingdom was stopped, its resources from foreign trade were greatly diminished; assignats did not pass current in other

countries; so that the course of exchange which had formerly been in favour of France two or three per cent. was now eighteen or twenty per cent. against it, which is a most ruinous circumstance for any country when it continues long. • The trade with the colonies was also in a manner annihilated by the foolish and contradictory decrees which had been rendered concerning the slaves and people of colour, or mulattoes.

M. Brissot, in particular, but not without the aid of some others of his Society of Friends of the Blacks, never lost any opportunity of exciting the colonies to insurrection; and the revolution was no sooner known of in St. Domingo, which is the principal of the French West-India islands, than a glorious insurrection took place, of the planters against the governor, and of the soldiers against their officers. This in the cause of liberty was applauded by the National Assembly, into which six deputies from St. Domingo had been admitted.*

As

* The admission of six deputies was not an act of the assembly itself, but of the king, or his minister, before the meeting of the states. Though this seems to be founded on equity, it does not, in reality, answer any purpose; for a small number of members from a portion of an empire that is not similarly situated with the country itself, only serves to augment discord, or to legalize oppression. As regulations for St. Domingo different from those for France were necessary, if the six representatives

As in St. Domingo and the other islands there are three different classes of men, white men, mulattoes, and blacks; and the two last are divided again into free mulattoes and mulattoes who are slaves, as well as into free blacks and black slaves, there was an ample field for the operation of the rights of man; but a sort of composition was entered into between philosophy and interest. Mulattoes born of free parents, and who therefore were themselves free, were considered as men, and admitted to enjoy all their rights. But no good could be expected from a decree that changed the old system and did not conform to the new one. "All men," says the Declaration of Rights, "are born and remain equal in rights;" the blacks, therefore, might with reason complain, and the whites were inclined to look with a very jealous and discontented eye on the new power conferred on a very numerous body of the inhabitants of the island, and which tended to derange entirely the internal government. When men find their interest sa-

did not agree to such regulations, it only served to render the colony discontented; and if they did agree, it gave an appearance of legality to what is only founded on policy, and not in justice. Small rich colonies will always be subject to arbitrary laws---not, perhaps, unjust ones, nor hard ones, but depending on the will of the mother country. It is in vain to deceive ourselves on this point, and it is unworthy of a great country to insult a small one, by giving it the appearance of a free government, when it is under an arbitrary one.

crificed to a principle that seems just, they may repine a little, but still they cannot refuse giving it some degree of approbation; but, when every thing is deranged by arbitrary will, as in this case, the discontents occasioned are without any allay. The consequence of this was, that the assembly which had passed this decree in the month of May 1791, repealed it the September following; thereby satisfying the white planters at the risk of displeasing and rendering desperate the other inhabitants of the islands.

Such a foundation for civil war and discord being laid in the colonies, and fomented by the defeated party which had obtained the first decree in France, it is not to be wondered at, if the blacks and mulattoes making one common cause, have since desolated that miserable island,* which

* The insurrections, massacres, and cruelties, of St. Domingo would make a large volume, were they to be detailed. The Abbé Gregoire and Brissot were two of the most active instigators of the revolt of the negroes and mulattoes. Gregoire, who was a member of the assembly, when he heard of a terrible massacre, in which the negroes had for their bloody standard a white infant impaled on a spear, declared it was the *plus beau jour de sa vie*. This philosophic cannibal was at supper when the news was brought, and he and his friends finished the evening with mutual congratulations and joy on the success of their plans. Human nature, whether white or black, must shudder at such barbarity, and blame the cool instigators much more than the ferocious people who revolted.

seemed, by a fatality hitherto unexampled, neither to partake of any of the blessings of freedom, nor of that security which an arbitrary government generally affords.

The assembly, in repealing the law in favour of mulattoes, in which they gave to the colonial assemblies the rights of internal legislation, referred the rights of the whites to the succeeding national assembly. Such conduct was neither firm, politically good, nor conformable to their own principles. The French themselves now found, that, instead of making a general declaration of the rights of man, they should have contented themselves with declaring what were the rights of Frenchmen; or, as they were vain enough to give the general declaration, they should have maintained it in its full force, and, as far as respected French dominions, have established and protected it.

The trade to the colonies was the chief foreign trade of France, it was computed to have given support to several millions of people; and therefore the internal miseries of that country were greatly increased by the colonial disturbances.

Whilst the Jacobin faction had thus destroyed government and law, and while the capital and sources of wealth and industry were every day diminishing

diminishing under their government, they had not been inactive in endeavouring to induce other nations to follow their example.

The leaders of the violent party, and those of the more moderate, however much they differed with respect to regulations in which they were personally concerned, agreed all nearly in their views with respect to other countries. As they imagined that people were free in proportion as government was feeble, they well knew, that France by acquiring liberty lost a great deal of that vigour which the other governments of Europe possess. The general opinion, therefore, of the reformers at the first outset was, to establish the same system all over Europe. The violent democrats and the moderates had at first taken America for a model; but it had been argued, that if the Thirteen United States were upon the same continent with European kingdoms, their government would be found unequal to the task of protection from its enemies: they had all, therefore, originally formed one plan as to the neighbours of France, and their quarrels amongst themselves did not alter their opinion in this respect. There are numberless proofs of this, but the chief one is founded on the rights of man which was drawn up by Mounier, La Fayette, and the moderates. This declaration of rights is evidently worded as

if they were legislating for the human race, and not for their own country alone.

The same moderate party was present, when the ridiculous embassy of the representatives of all the nations of the world appeared at the bar a year after, and when titles of nobility were abolished; and it was the principles of the moderate party that were trusted to for the conversion of mankind.

Thomas Paine was the agent in England of the moderate party, and considered La Fayette as his patron and protector in Paris; yet La Fayette and his party pretended to be attached to a monarchical form of government, which clearly proves that, though they differed from Petion and Robespierre in point of the application of principles, they did not differ much in the principles themselves.

Before other nations were fairly aware of what was meant by the French reformers, agents were sent into different countries; and these agents were known by the name of the Propagande, which implies perfectly the intention of propagating their opinions.

Philosophy and good-will to men were the avowed principles of the members of the Propagande, but it was unfortunate for these missionaries,

ries, that they had not more modesty or more address.

Those who preach philanthropy and humanity are naturally to be expected to do it with some degree of meekness and patience, to offer their good advice, and to pity those who are too ignorant or wilful to follow their precepts; but as the Jacobin Propagande pursued another mode, it is clear they had another intention.

It is very true that the laws of this nation are such, that men dare not openly revolt; and it is equally true, that those who favour the French system consider nothing short of open treason and rebellion as a proof of treasonable and rebellious practices; so that, until the mischief is done, they will not allow that it is intended.

Most people in England who are well disposed, and wish to support the present constitution, are inclined to believe that efforts have been making ever since the year 1790 to create disorder by an imitation of the French revolution. As for those who keep up the clamours about liberty and reform, THEY KNOW that such manœuvres have existed; they know that the law of England is in criminal matters so attentive to the rights of individuals, that in all cases where there is not a direct crime proved, no punishment follows; and that

that it is very difficult to apply the law to a new species of an attack made upon the peace of the community at large, and which can be carried on under the appearance of patriotism and good intention.

Of these manœuvres in England we shall say more hereafter, but as far as they relate directly to the French, it is a sufficient proof of their existence, that at Paris the club publicly boasted of propagating its principles in all nations. That the name of the Propagande was given to its emissaries by the club itself, and that correspondences in a fraternal way were actually commenced between some English societies and the French club.*

If a number of circumstances have concurred to prevent the flame of reform from breaking

* The assembly was as desirous of foreign importance and fame as the clubs. A postmaster's son at Louvain, of the name of Wolfe, whose intellects were deranged, had for many years imagined himself to be a prince; as his madness was harmless, his friends did not confine him, and he used to sign his name the Prince de Wolfe, and to wear stars and ribands of different orders. This prince wrote a letter to the assembly, testifying his admiration of the wisdom and philosophy of their decrees, and promising to imitate so great and good an example in his own territories. The letter was received and read with enthusiasm in the assembly, and the president was ordered to write an answer to the Prince de Wolfe. One would be apt to think, the ignorance of the twelfth century was returned, when the geography of Brabant was unknown in France.

forth,

forth, in all its Parisian splendor, in England, that is no proof that it was not attempted, although *its not having succeeded* is the only argument that is offered by those who deny its existence, while there are, on the other side of the question, numerous and incontrovertible facts, which convince us that great numbers of persons admired, or affected to admire, the French revolution; and as the first way to bring on revolution is to excite discontent with the present state of things, the celebration of French liberty and insurrection was the natural beginning of revolution in England.

We first admire, then love, and then embrace.

The celebration of French liberty, which was called French emancipation and happiness, seemed to the unsuspecting as an act merely occasioned by a benevolent principle; and there existed no law to prevent such celebrations, although it was clear, that men who in this manner approved of the revolution of France, were actually holding up all the excesses and extravagances of that revolution to our admiration; it tended directly to make the common people in England discontented with their situation, by artfully representing France as the freest country in the world; and whatever the theory of the French revolution might be, it led the ignorant to conceive, that
mur-

murder, massacre, and destruction of all distinction and order in society, were the methods of obtaining the happy system which they were employed in celebrating.

The friends of the French system had, at the beginning, motives to support it, which they have not now, and they had arguments in its favour which they can never have again. The principles of the revolutionists had not been tried, and therefore its admirers might imagine that they could be reduced to practice; they did not, then, perhaps, know, that the revolution would destroy its own founders, nor had experience then proved what it has done so completely since, that wherever revolt against the ruling powers is admitted as a fundamental law, it must destroy every other law, and that the real term of the French revolution will only be when this principle shall be completely exploded, and when those clubs which, though self-created, interfere in executive government, shall be considered as inimical to the real liberties of mankind.

The democratic exertions of the Propagande, when the revolution was in its infancy, when the theory was promulgated with ostentation, but before experiment had sealed its condemnation, were as successful as they were energetic; and if the revolutionists had been able to preserve even the

the appearance of liberty and happiness, without really enjoying them, there would not probably be at this time any kingdom in Europe which would not have followed their example.

The insular situation of England, its language, and the peculiar advantage long enjoyed by its inhabitants, of living under a free government, and of comprehending better than most other nations in what freedom consists; together with the spirit of moderation which, upon almost all occasions, they have shewn, protected us against so violent and metaphysical a reform as our Gallic neighbours wished to introduce amongst us; but other countries, that were not so well secured from the attacks of their fraternity and philosophy, soon felt the effects of a system which offered plunder to the needy, equality to the vain, and promised liberty to all.*

Liege, governed by an ecclesiastical prince, had revolted against its bishop, in imitation of the French, and mutual congratulations had passed between the chiefs of the parties; and if the principality of Liege had not formed a part of the German empire, it is very probable that the re-

* It is strange enough, that in the French language there is no word for freedom---liberty and freedom are not absolutely synonymous terms in English.

volutionists would have continued to be an imitation of France, which was professedly taken as a model. The emperor's interference put an end to this revolt, and thereby prevented similar acts of violence to those to which the territory of Avignon has since been a prey.

A revolt in Flanders and Brabant was excited at the same time, but that taking a bad turn, did not meet with the full approbation of the French. Religion was not banished from the Flemish provinces as it was from France, and the contest was not absolutely for the destruction of order and property, but was directed against the house of Austria. When the power of the emperor over these fertile provinces was destroyed, the parties who had hitherto been united quarrelled amongst themselves, and the democratic party sunk in the struggle. The Flemish and Brabanters were then treated by the French as undeserving of liberty, and those who were exiled from it received from one of the French clubs the following letter of condolence upon the event of the revolt, and of congratulation as to their intentions, with a sort of hint, that if there should arrive a better occasion, they might expect some assistance. The letter runs thus :

“ Gen-

" Gentlemen,

" You know how to appreciate liberty, you
 " wish for it, but unfortunate events have hin-
 " dered you from conquering it. The friends of
 " the French constitution* *embrace the whole world*
 " *in their system of philanthropy*, and it is on that
 " principle that they hope, that you will, Gen-
 " tlemen, on returning to your country, sow the
 " seeds of OUR BENEFICENT PROJECTS, that they
 " may produce a plentiful harvest."

This letter, signed Rochambeau, president of the club of Maubeuge, in the month of September, 1791, shews plainly enough the disposition of the clubs with respect to Brabant and Flanders, as well as their pretensions to the character of being the philanthropists of the whole human race.

Switzerland, which has the misfortune of being contiguous to France, was worked upon in the same way.

Mirabeau had instituted at Paris, in conjunction with several Swiss malcontents, a club, called The Friends of Swiss Liberty, which club carried on its correspondences with its partisans in Switzerland, and was so far patronised by the national

* Which did not till long after exist.

assembly,

assembly, that a deputation from the club was received at its bar, as if this club had been a legal body. The Swiss magistrates, however, remonstrated against this, without any attention being paid to their complaints.

Papers had been distributed in great numbers in Switzerland amongst the country people in all the aristocratic cantons, informing them of the grievances they laboured under. Whether the villany, the impudence, or the imprudence of this conduct, were the greater, would be difficult to say, but the fact is certain.

A M. de Perigny was arrested in the Pays de Vaud for dispersing seditious pamphlets, which plainly excited the peasants to rebellion, and the courts of justice in Berne, where the fact was proved, were so well convinced that if they punished this man as the law directed by imprisonment, they would offend the French nation, that they did not venture to do so, but were obliged to satisfy themselves with banishing him from Switzerland. This same M. de Perigny was a Frenchman, and not a Swiss, therefore he could not allege that patriotism was his motive, as most of the Propagande gentlemen do. He was active in exciting the peasants of Lower Valais to insurrection, where he also escaped without punishment.

Mira.

Mirabeau and his fellow-labourers in literature, who were, as already has been said, refugees from Geneva, worked hard to create a revolution there upon principles of pure democracy, such as reigned in France after the 10th of August, 1792. This revolution was to be commenced when a signal was given, by firing the revolutionary air of *ça ira*, under the windows of the magistrates, in which the patriotic wish, of *seeing all the aristocrats hanged*, was rendered more complete, by wishing that all the *bourgeois* might share the same fate.* The insurgents, not finding themselves supported by the French peasants in the neighbouring Pays de Gex as they expected, dispersed after a few days of trouble and confusion.

That all these movements originated in Paris is clear from the circumstance, that the journalists who were devoted to the Jacobin club celebrated this attempt to revolt, as well as all the other insurrections that happened in different places, and declared, that Geneva would very soon, like Avignon, beg to be incorporated in the French empire.

The Genevese, far from begging to be incorporated, took the alarm, and begged to be ex-

* Tous les aristocrates à la lanterne.
Et tous les bourgeois aussi.

cused, so that from that time the revolt was stifled, and the government of Geneva rather gained strength by this abortive attempt.

The revolution of the 14th of July was celebrated in the Pays de Vaud with somewhat more eclat than at Birmingham, and was attended with a plot to give up that country, and even Geneva, and a part of Savoy, to the French, as Avignon had been given up. This conspiracy was carried on by the patriotic clubs in that country, which corresponded with the patriotic clubs in France; the ringleaders were arrested, but the senate of Berne was afraid to punish manoeuvres, in which the democratic leaders of so powerful a neighbouring nation bore the chief part.

Even M. Necker was enraged at the attempts made to ruin the peace of his country, and complains that those little states had the *weakness to think themselves happy* till the French revolutionists sent their emissaries amongst them.

Such were the efforts of the French clubs amongst their neighbours. It was impossible to do the same things in what is called High Germany, but at Mentz and Frankfort there were clubs, and at Vienna and Berlin emissaries, who did all that they durst venture in propagating their levelling system.

During

During all this time, the emigration from the interior of France had been going on. Fear had sent off many of the proprietors of lands, and the insubordination in the army had sent away a great number of the military officers. The clergy, too, had begun to fly from persecution and their native land; so that in proportion as the revolution advanced, the two obnoxious orders quitted France; and one of the things that vexed the general bulk of the people most, and excited the greatest disquiet and anxiety with respect to the event of the revolution was, that though the nobility and clergy now existed no more within the kingdom, misery and discontent increased at a rapid rate. The burgeses and the low people * begun now to eye each other with jealousy, and to suspect that the existence of the privileged orders had not been the only cause of former grievances.

In entering upon the famous subject of emigration, respecting which all Europe is so much divided in opinion, and for which the emigrants are so much blamed, it will be proper to examine with some degree of attention into the causes which first led the proprietors of land in France to abandon their property, and royalists to abandon their king.

* Les bourgeois et le bas peuple ou le petit peuple.

It is always a difficult, and often an useless task to plead the cause of the unsuccessful ; but let not those to whom fortune has been more favourable, judge with too great rigour the motives of the unfortunate emigrants. We trust, that though they have been mistaken, they have not been guilty, and we shall see that even their mistake in emigrating was a very natural one.

No body so heartily laments the emigration as the emigrants themselves do ; they are now perfectly satisfied that it might have been better to have staid in the country, and in this every one will agree ; but it by no means follows, that though it has had an unfortunate issue, the origin was either wicked or foolish.

To those who accuse the emigrants of having abandoned their king, and thereby having shewn that they were not steady royalists, it will be fair to put the question, whether they think those same emigrants were indifferent as to the loss of their lands and property ? when those men abandoned their king, they likewise abandoned their all ; their feelings as proprietors cannot be doubted, and it will readily be believed that they did not mean to lose the property that they abandoned. Finding, then, that those men did abandon, by leaving France, property which they did not mean to lose, it is but fair to grant that
they

they might have abandoned their king without any intention of hurting his cause.

But we may go much farther, and prove that the emigrants abandoned their lands with an intention of preserving them, and their king with the intention of supporting him; and that they are no more blameable for the unfortunate fate of their master, than they are for the decree that alienates their estates.

We have seen how on the 14th of July and the following days, France became a sort of camp, and shortly after how all the cities and towns were filled with clubs, and administrative bodies, who were all regulated by popular assemblies.

We have seen how instantaneously this change was operated, as well as the direction which it took. The nobles not only were deprived of all importance, and of all means of consulting together, but they were suspected, persecuted, and oppressed, so that there was no possibility for them to make any effort in their own favour.

Although the personal danger to the nobles was full as great, and even perhaps greater during the first year of the revolution than afterwards, yet the emigration did not begin then; for though personal danger might operate on some individuals,

duals, it by no means appears to have been the principal cause of emigration, which only became great in proportion as all hope of restoring peace and order was lost.

The uniform system of persecution towards the ancient proprietors, and the gradual incroachments upon their rights and titles, together with the system of equality which was openly proclaimed by the journalists, left no hope of justice but from an appeal to force ; and any thing of the sort in the interior of the kingdom was, as we plainly perceive, absolutely impossible.

It may be very natural for proprietors in other countries to look with a sort of contempt on men who they suppose abandoned their king, their country, and their estates, through fear ; but if such persons will examine the matter, they will find that fear of personal safety was not so much the cause, as a consciousness of the impossibility of making any effort in a country where the reunion of a dozen of proprietors was considered as a dangerous plot, and where, therefore, any co-operation in a general cause was impossible.

The conduct of the king, too, had left the nobility without hope ; they saw virtue and good intention in all he did, but they saw that nothing but concession added to concession were to be expected

pected from a king, who, together with his family, were under the perpetual danger of being massacred by the mob, in case of any resistance to the decrees of the assembly. If we must be permitted to call things by their real names, Louis XVI. was not now a king; *he was a prisoner*, and the passive instrument of the Jacobin club, which governed the assembly, to whom the king was no more than the great seal of England is to the Chancellor; an instrument that gives formality to decrees, and nothing more.

The activity of the French nation is well enough known to every one, and though the court was stupidly inactive, the whole of the proprietors in the kingdom were not; they had considered very seriously, whether by force, by concession, or by firmness, they could protect themselves, and, as the history of the revolution plainly shews, they found them all equally useless. The king, their master, was a prisoner, and all power was in the hands of the members of the clubs, who were indefatigable in pursuing, denouncing, and persecuting the proprietors throughout the whole kingdom.

The Count d'Artois had emigrated in the beginning, with all his family, as we have already said, as well as the Prince of Condé. A small number of nobles attached to their persons, from

various motives, had followed, and this inspired into the unfortunate and proscribed nobility within the kingdom, an idea, that as they could not find any means of making a stand, and of proposing conditions to their oppressors whilst they remained where they were, they might succeed better were they to rally around the unfortunate princes of the house of Bourbon, who were in a land where men were permitted the liberty of assembling and consulting for their mutual interest and safety.

Thus the emigration begun under the conviction, that whilst they remained in the interior of France, the nobles could do nothing but submit to every injustice and every indignity; and that were they to re-unite in another country, they might have some chance of treating with their oppressors: it is not therefore fair to attribute to folly or ill intention a measure which, however unfortunate it may have been, did at the time that it was adopted offer a better prospect than any exertion that could be made whilst they remained in the kingdom.

Unfortunate as the emigrants are, have those proprietors that remained been more happy? or had they all remained, is it certain that they would have been better? nay, is it probable? No; the revolution was begun, and was determined upon. The assignats were necessary to support the revolution, and the

lands of the clergy were an insufficient pledge for their payment. The crown lands and the *appanage* of the princes were likewise insufficient, and it was perfectly evident that the soil of France alone could answer as security for a species of money which had no intrinsic value, and which was employed with unexampled profusion.

The nobles had but two things to risk, a general proscription of their property in case of their emigration, or a continued system of attacking their lives and properties individually if they remained. If an imprudence was committed, it was only in chusing the former rather than the latter. Many persons will no doubt say, that if the whole body of the nobles had remained within the kingdom, it would have prevented the seizing of their property. This is possible, and it would be absurd to attempt proving the contrary; but it must be allowed, that though we admit the possibility, the probability is liable to be greatly questioned. The nobles composed but a small portion of the kingdom, and they were all in it when so many castles were burned, when the peasants cut down their woods, and persecuted them in every way that suited their interest or their inclination, so that it is difficult to see by what means men reduced to this situation could have protected themselves. One class of proprietors, the monied men, who, on account of their democracy and their pecuniary

niary resources, might have expected good treatment, did not emigrate, and they have been little better treated than the nobles that remained; there does not therefore appear to be any great reason for imputing to the emigration alone the misfortunes of the emigrants.

But when all is considered, we must allow that as the revolution has taken such a violent turn, and that the Jacobins never shewed at any time a disposition to accommodate matters, it would be highly unfair to lay to the account of the emigration the violence and injustice of that terrible faction, and even if we do, what is the conclusion? Why, that the proprietors who emigrated were timid and unfortunate, and that the Jacobins were audacious and unjust.

That those who began the emigration had no hostile intentions to their country, is probable; but even if they did wish to appeal to arms for the preservation of their rights, that was only doing what those who censure them say they ought to have done in the heart of the country; for nobody has gone so far as to say that they ought to have tamely submitted to robbery, and far less has any one ventured to deny the existence of the robbery.*

The

* The difference between the aristocratic and democratic histories of the revolution, does not consist so much in a difference with

The first year of the assemblage of nobles beyond the limits of their country, had been spent in pleasures and expenses, for which they have very justly been reproached; but we must admit, that in charging them with levity and folly on that account, we must acquit them of the charge of bad intention. They appear to have trusted that the revolution was too violent in its principles, and too ill combined to last long; and many of them seem to have emigrated with an intention of waiting for the moment when, tired out with its excesses and miseries, the nation should become more just and reasonable, or, when the constitution being finished, security for property and persons might be expected. It is not to our purpose to give a history of the conduct of the emigrants when out of their country, but the first causes of that emigration are so intimately connected with the Jacobin conduct, that it would have been improper, if not impossible, not to enter into an examination of it.

The assembling of the mal-content proprietors near the frontiers excited great alarm and uneasiness in France; and long before there was the

with regard to actions committed, as the supposed motives of the actors. The democrats, to a man, allow the persecution of the nobles, but then it was upon the *good grounds* of a suspicion of their counter revolutionary intentions.

least

least appearance of any hostile attempt, the alarm was general, and fear magnified the reports spread abroad, without foundation of a formidable invasion.

France being covered with armed men, the ancient regiments were of little use in the country; it was therefore proposed by the assembly to take some steps to prevent invasion, by forming camps upon the frontiers. M. Duportail, a friend of La Fayette's, who was war minister, being called to the bar, explained to the assembly, that though it might be very prudent, and perhaps necessary to augment the garrisons in the frontier towns, yet that as no movements of a hostile nature existed amongst neighbouring nations, it would be imprudent to *establish camps*; that such a thing would be, as it always had been, considered as a hostile measure, and would furnish the enemies of France with a good pretext for making hostile preparations. This is a proof that the fears of the assembly, and its accusation against the Emperor as being the first to menace war, were ill founded, for the arguments of Duportail, who never was a popular man, were so far considered as good, that the measure of establishing camps was for that time given up.

The anxiety and uneasiness with which the emigration was attended from the first beginning, was
a proof

a proof that the democratic party conceived that danger would ultimately arise from its little regard to justice, and from the despair which its conduct inspired to the party oppressed. Injustice is perpetually attended with fear and suspicion; and surely, though this truth has always been allowed, it never was before exemplified upon so large a scale as in the present instance.

Amongst the feudal rights which had been abolished, were several in Alsace, belonging to German princes, (as being formerly a part of the German empire.) The haughty reformers had treated these foreign princes with as little ceremony as they did the subjects of France, and to all remonstrances made on this occasion, they had never given but either an evasive or insolent answer.

Perhaps the emigrating nobility conceived hopes, that as their cause was a common one with that of many of the German princes themselves, they might expect the more readily support; and it is also not improbable that the levelling faction in France found its fears augmented from the same reason; but certain it is, that it was a general opinion in France so early as the month of August, 1791, that a war with the empire would take place, and it is equally certain, that at that time the Emperor had not even the complement
of

of troops that by the treaty of peace he was allowed to have on the German frontiers.

Things were in this state of inquietude as to foreign nations, and of anarchy and misery at home, when the moderate party got the better of the *enragées*, as they were called, or outrageous republicans, by the fusiliad of the petitioners in the Champs de Mars, and when the general impatience called out for a constitution, and the return of peace and order.

The conclusion of the constitution was therefore resolved upon, and its revision, the proper arrangement of the decrees, and the addition of such as were yet wanting to render it complete, were hastened by every means that could be thought of.

Many people imagined that the impatience and haste of the assembly on this occasion arose from being sensible of the critical situation in which they were. The patience of the people was exhausted; an enemy, it was thought, menaced on the frontiers, and there were innumerable enemies within; the king too had shewn in an unequivocal manner his disapprobation of what the assembly had done; the laws were without force, the finances in disorder, and no taxes were collected; so that without a change that

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might give hope of a speedy end to those numerous evils, there was an impossibility of going on at all. It is generally believed that the assembly was very sensible of this impossibility, and knew that the approach of winter would be fatal to their authority and to the constitution itself, if it were not speedily completed.

It was now that the talents of the deputies and the constitution itself were to be put to a trial; they had the difficult task to perform of making one whole of their work, and of giving some solidity and durability to a system, of which one of the leading principles was, that it ought to have no assured stability, nor any fixed duration.

A complete criticism on this constitution would require a whole volume to itself, therefore would be inconsistent with our plan; but it is necessary to enter a little into it, because the manner in which it is drawn up is remarkably favourable to the Jacobin societies.

When any two principles are placed in opposition to each other, the weaker is sure to sink under the stronger, whatever the justice of the case may be; and if any legislature, in laying down constitutional principles, or in a code of laws, falls into the error of inserting principles or rules which are opposite in their nature to each other,

other, that which favours the views of the people to be governed the most, will occasion the other to be set aside.

The constitution included many articles in direct opposition to each other. Insurrection was declared a duty, and security of property a right; but where there is to be insurrection, there can be no security: this last, therefore, falls to the ground. The Jacobins, it is true, have said, that their meaning was, that insurrection was only to be employed in cases of oppression; but who was to be the judge of these acts of oppression, and did the Jacobins themselves ever attend to this? Did they ever determine beforehand whether they were oppressed or not? It would at any rate have been very useful to have given a definition of oppression; for, after they had conquered their rights, it is not easily to conceive how oppression was to take place. According to themselves the will of the majority made the law, and therefore no law could be oppressive; as long as the ministers of justice confined themselves to the application of the law, resistance was certainly not permitted, and when they went beyond it, it is so evident that resistance may and ought to take place, that to make a decree for that purpose is like making a decree to allow a man to defend himself against a robber and a murderer on the highway.

It

It is well known, that when in any nation the great majority becomes discontented with the form of government, it will be changed; but it is absurd to make this a right, and it was villanous to word the decree in such a manner as to lead the people into the error of considering opposition by violence to the governors as being a duty, or a right, because such a principle is destructive of every law or regulation that can be made.

The article which, by way of making men free and independent, prevents the present race from binding their children, and frees us from whatever was done by our forefathers, is, if possible, worse than the decree of insurrection, because it leads men perpetually to think that the existing state of things, whatever it may be, is founded upon injustice. As a nation does not change its identity, like a single line of individuals, in what manner, and during how long a time, are laws, once made, to be in force? When are they to be revised and revived? Is it to be at the end of an age, or as soon as the majority of those who decreed them are no more? or is it to be at any any stated period? * This question presented itself

* A full examination of this would be curious enough, if the absurdity of the principle did not render such a thing unnecessary. Suppose there are five millions of electors in a country, then 2,600,000 makes a majority; but as the whole five

itself to the assembly, and was debated with great seriousness, but all to no purpose; it was found impossible to reconcile the constitution itself with any regulation for its duration. The errors of wild, impracticable theory, and the danger of passing decrees in half a minute and without reflection, began now to appear; but it was too late to remedy the mischief which was already done; the assembly was, therefore, under the necessity of finishing the constitutional work with saying, that, though the right of the people to change the constitution at will was sacred and inviolable, yet that it was the opinion of the majority of the members of the present assembly that it would not be prudent for the nation to change it for thirty years to come. So far they said tolerably well, but the members who were now going to become private citizens were afraid, that this would not secure them from the arbitrary changes

millions are renewed in the course of things, in twenty-five years, it follows, that there would be 100,000 new voters in six months. So that a new majority might exist without any change of opinion in any individual; in such a case the constitution should be revised every six months; and the rule to find the duration of a constitution would be (supposing men were not to be allowed to change their minds) found thus, the total number of voters divided by twenty-five would give the yearly renewals, and the number of the majority in favour of the constitution, divided by the yearly renewals, would give in years, or the fractions of a year, the time that the constitution ought to last.

which

which their successors might probably think proper to make, and of which they themselves might not approve;* and, therefore, under pretence of directing the form in which the constitution might be changed, they ordained— That the two legislative assemblies immediately succeeding should have no right to propose any alteration; that the third assembly might propose a change, and if a majority of two other assemblies after are of the same opinion, then the sixth assembly might be an assembly of revision;† which last, after all, should only have the right of altering such parts of the constitution as the majority of *the three* preceding assemblies shall have pointed out specifically.

If volumes were to be written on the absurdity of the constitution, nothing could so completely shew it, as this awkward manner of launching it into the world. The inutility of finishing, and making the king accept a constitution, which was not, perhaps, to last a day, was evident to every one; and the ridicule of declaring the unlimited rights of the people to

* A true democrat in the French way is a despot when in office and a rebel when out; and in private life, oppressive to inferiors and insolent to superiors.

† This assembly of revision was to be composed of 249 members more than the usual assemblies. What strange combinations errors lead to, that men are too vain to acknowledge!

change the constitution, and then endeavouring to fetter it with those arbitrary conditions, is inconceivable. The constitution became a monstrous production, of which the parts were at variance amongst themselves, and whatever credit it might have obtained in advance, ought to have been now withdrawn, for no party could defend it.*

The most inexcusable of the mistakes committed by the constituent assembly, was in the arrangement of the decrees, and not making any distinction between laws that originate in natural justice, that are immutable as justice, and which, therefore, never can admit of being changed; and those articles which are framed upon convenience and expediency, and which are liable to be changed with circumstances, and for which changes, therefore, a provision ought to be made.

In England, where we are not so fond of abstract principles, and where we have contented ourselves with laying down practical laws, and establishing our rights as Englishmen, without inveigling ourselves in the labyrinths of theory, our forefathers by means of strong common sense

* Mr. Paine, for instance, could not defend this latter part, and his opponents dispute the former, in which the perpetual right of changing is supposed to exist; so that, as the constitution stood, it was exceptionable to all.

made the distinction, and resolved this difficulty that was insurmountable to the acute French lawgivers. The three powers in England of king, lords, and commons, cannot alter the original bill of rights; they cannot make an act of parliament that will infringe upon any article contained in that; but they have full authority and power to regulate every thing else belonging to the laws and government of the country.

Thus, for instance, the legislative power in England could not make a law to enable the king to lay on new taxes merely by his own authority, because such a change would deprive us of our rights as Englishmen; neither could they make a law to set aside the king's authority, as to the sanction of its acts, for that would be destroying the convention made between the people and the king; nor can all the three powers united give effect to any law before the date of its passing, because that would be contrary to natural justice. We have no need, therefore, for a revisionary parliament on that head; and, as to all other sort of acts, they can be either laid on, or laid aside, as kings, lords, and commons please. Thus, without any *form being organized for change and insurrection*, or any theories which might lead to conclusions of which the result would be dangerous to our peace and security, we are happily governed.

It would be endless to point out the errors and contradictions of this constitutional act, in which, after giving equal rights to all, a great number of articles exist, that deprive certain persons of a part of their rights without their having committed any crime, by which men alone ought to be deprived of the natural rights of citizens;* and one very material regulation is that which deprives poor citizens, who do not pay three livres, or half a crown, a year in taxes, from the right of voting.

In one respect the national assembly took from the people a part of their original rights as Frenchmen, who, when they chose representatives for themselves in the states general, had a right to give them, as we have seen, cahiers of instructions; this right the assembly took away, and declared that the electoral assemblies only met to choose representatives, but not to debate on any subject of legislation. They likewise forbid any petition from being presented by any portion of the people as an incorporated body, and it will appear that, though in the abstract declaration of rights they had been very lavish towards MAN, yet in his individual capacity as a citizen, they

* To be a voter, a man must be a national guard, and take the civic oath. The rights of man should, therefore, have its title changed for that of the rights of men who have enrolled themselves in the guards, &c.

did not allow him any great share of importance.

It would, as has already been observed, require much time to enter into all the inconsistencies of the constitution which is long ago thrown aside, as might have been expected; but it is worth remarking, that the general design apparent in the whole is to deceive the people by the pompous declaration of rights, which, when applied to practice, vanish into air;* and which it is not to be wondered at if the deluded people spurned from them in disdain, when, after the tenth of August, they had by a new insurrection thrown off the thirty years fetters which the assembly attempted to put upon their sovereign will.

It is an undoubted fact, that the assembly succeeded much better in deceiving strangers and even those who consider themselves as men of knowledge and science in other countries, than they did in deceiving their own countrymen; for

* As for instance, that all men are eligible to all employments in the state.---What is the signification of such an article? Must not a man have the talents fitted for the place, and must not the choice fall amongst those who are so fitted? and is it not the man who can make the best interest that will be chosen, whether that choice lays with an individual or a number of electors? So that this right which men in fact enjoy in England, and in most countries, is a mere tub thrown out to the whole.

even the lowest class of the people soon perceived that the constitutional act was made to deceive by astonishing, but was in fact a ridiculous combination contrary to common sense.*

Perhaps, after all, the greatest error consisted in obliging the king, who was confined a close prisoner, to accept the constitution: this was an inexcusable act, as it was oppression towards one, who, if we only consider him as an individual, had a right to refuse being king, and to retire where he pleased; and it was great injustice to the nation, for no good could arise out of a transaction, where there was neither confidence nor good-will, and where both were so indispensably necessary.

The king accepted the constitution, such as it was, with only making some severe but just remarks. He observed, that many acts which had been passed as simple legislative decrees, were in the revision placed amongst the articles of the constitution; that he was afraid the power given to him would not be sufficient to enable him to render his people happy; but hoping that time and experience might bring things to a better

* Fait pour eblouir, mais un tas des cuchonries qui nont pas du sens commune.

state, he would do whatever lay in his power to make things go on well and happily.

The assembly, during the latter period of its session, had been more free than either before or since. The fusillade of the 17th of July had not yet lost its effect, and, during this period, some symptoms of returning moderation and calm were apparent. The laws against emigration and the formality of passports for travellers were abolished; and it is but justice to M. de la Fayette to say, that with him originated a motion for a general amnesty, and a stop being put to all proceedings against people suspected of revolutionary crimes.

It is difficult to say, whether this amnesty was most favourable to the democratic or the aristocratic faction: it is certain, that if law and regular government had been immediately to take place, the turbulent democrats had most to fear; the measure must, therefore, be considered as being equally desirable to both parties, and as a very proper one to take place at the finishing of the national regeneration.

The surrender of power made by the assembly, as well as the cordiality which appeared between the different parties at the time, has been held up as a matter of admiration, but without any
just

just cause;* for it is certain, the first assembly had wearied out the patience of the people, that the power could not have been continued much longer, and that the members had all of them sufficient reason to wish for some moderation in the method of governing. The violent members, who were now going to quit their public and inviolable character, were willing to avert the effects of private vengeance; and the moderate members were equally desirous of averting that public persecution which they had all along opposed and feared, and which was now more to be feared by them than ever, should it continue.†

The constitutional assembly will never be excused for the deception it practised in the latter part of its reign, and for the pusillanimity it displayed in not venturing to inquire into any of the evils which were so evidently existing at the time; and it is even a question, whether it would not have been better for France, if the violent

* The term of the duration of an assembly had been regulated for two years only, and the constituent assembly had already sat near two and a half.

† It is certain that M. d'André, and several other members of the Jacobin party, accepted bribes from the court to induce them to be a little moderate towards the end of the constituent assembly. Louis XVI. having always been the friend of moderation, had a right to purchase it with money, as well as he always had done by personal services; but what are we to think of violent patriots who receive such bribes?

party

party of the Jacobins had triumphed, for along with the moderate party came those half-measures which are generally so ruinous.

A king, who was known to be dissatisfied with the constitution, was imposed upon the people as a king who approved it, and who, probably, would have approved of it heartily, had a few modifications been made to satisfy his conscience with respect to religious matters, and his feelings with respect to himself, his family, and the nobles.

The French nation and the assembly boasted of magnanimity in passing over the flight of the royal family; but was there any thing like true courage, or greatness of mind, in keeping a king amongst them by force,* and obliging him to accept a constitution which he himself was to put in execution, without attempting to render it agreeable to him by any modifications, or without, at least, hearing what he had to propose, and reasoning over the matter so as to convince

* A pretended offer was made to let the king retire from Paris, and accept the constitution; but this was only to blind the people. The persons who had aided in the king's escape were yet in prison, and it was not consistent either with his honour or known character, to abandon them; besides, would he have been more free while he remained in France? The king declined accepting this offer.

his

his mind that it was well and wisely arranged? It is difficult to conceive what ideas of liberty that assembly could have; they talked of giving liberty to the slaves in America, and there is no slave set to perform so slavish a task as that which they assigned to their king.

The despotism, with respect to their successors, who must alter nothing of their constitutional code, which unanointed and unanealed was thrown out into the world as a perfect work; but, above all, the want of courage to inquire into the real state of France with respect to its neighbours, that it might be known whether war or peace was to be brought upon the nation by the invasion of Avignon, by the invasion of German property in Alsace, and by the attempts made and avowed of overturning all the governments of Europe.

The maker of a machine ought to keep it in his possession till he has tried whether it will work, or it ought to be put into the hands of some one capable of rectifying any errors that may be, or of supplying what may be wanting; this is the practice that experience and common sense have dictated, and from which it follows evidently, that the constituent assembly should have either remained at its post, and made a trial of the constitution, or left a power with their

successors to make such changes, as on trial might be found to be necessary. It was very evident, that by leaving the constitution in this untried state, in the midst of broils and discontents, that were but little short of civil war * within the kingdom, and the danger of an attack from without, it could not be expected that the constitution would long stand its ground. There seem to be only three ways of explaining this extraordinary conduct in the constituent assembly.

It has already been observed, that the impatience of the nation was become so great, that it was absolutely necessary to finish the constitution, and to afford hopes of returning repose and tranquillity to a fatigued and miserable people. To have produced it as an imperfect work would not have answered this purpose,† and would have

* In a letter addressed to the people of England, and printed in Paris in the beginning of 1792, to warn them of the efforts of the Propagande, and against admiring the French constitution, it was clearly proved, that an insurrection must be made from necessity, in order to give the assembly the power of modifying the constitution.

† It is one grand part of the Jacobin system to give hope of better times; thus the 5th of October, when the king was brought to Paris, was one æra for the commencement of happiness. The fœderation on the 14th of July, 1790, was another. The destroying the customs at the entrance of towns in May, 1791, was third, and now there only remained the completion of the constitution.

been

been even dangerous to the assembly itself, for they had promised to the people happiness, and they had taught the lowest of the rabble to consider themselves as fractions of the sovereign, and had thereby rendered them very wilful, impatient, and imperious.

The theoretical principles by which the assembly had all along been guided led to so many inconsistencies, that it would be very difficult for the succeeding assembly to make a complete and durable work, even if powers were left them sufficient; and it was beyond a doubt, that if such powers had been left, the first use made of them would have been to expose all the inconsistencies and mistakes, and thereby throw odium and disgrace on the first assembly. It has, therefore, been imagined, that to avoid such consequences, and knowing that the revolution was not finished, and that they could not finish it, they determined * on this method as the safest and the best for themselves, and perhaps as good as any other for the nation; because, if another revolution must come, the manner of its coming was not of much importance.

* During the whole of the revolution assignats did not diminish in value so rapidly as while the constitution was receiving the *last degree of perfection and solidity*, which is a plain proof of the general opinion.

Another motive has been assigned to the assembly ; it has been supposed by many, that the republican party, finding itself unable to maintain its ground by force (since the fusillade of the 17th of July) was determined to undermine by stratagem the monarchy, and assisted with pleasure and alacrity in setting the new monarchical constitution agoing in so imperfect a state, that it could not continue to go long. One thing is certain, that the apparent moderation of this party, which broke out in all its force on the 10th of August in the year following, gives a great degree of probability to this belief ; and certain it is, that if the greatest enemy to monarchical government in France had been consulted, he could not have advised a more infallible method of bringing it to an end than by finishing the constitution in the manner which we have seen. As we have yet to follow the manœuvres of that same party during the ten months that the constitution existed, we shall have many occasions of proving the probability of this opinion.

The constituent assembly was divided, as we have already said, into three parties, royalists, moderates, and democrats ; but that of the royalists was now reduced to silence and insignificance, therefore the opinion or the will of those few who remained is of little importance, though it is certain they never expected the constitution would
stand

stand long, and perhaps they had some expectation, that at its fall the ancient form of government might revive.

The moderates were divided, not by disposition but by their talents, into two classes; the ambitious theorists, and the dupes, or, as they were called, *les imbecils*.* The first of these were afraid at the work of their own hands, and wanted to get quietly out of the danger; the second, ignorant of the imperfections of the work, and thinking to decree an equality of rights and liberty was all that was necessary to render men free and happy, thought, that in concurring in sealing the constitution, they were insuring happiness to the nation; it is not therefore astonishing, under this view of the matter, if the whole of the moderate party joined cordially in finishing the work which it had begun.

That the republican party was not sincere on this occasion is very certain; but it was impossible, as we have already said, for them to change matters immediately by force, and therefore they

* *Les Gens de bonne foi*---*les nigards de la revolution*, were also terms applied to these dupes. All the converts to French principles amongst men of rank in England were of this class, according to the opinion of the French, and hence the repeated declarations, that they despise Mr. Fox as much as they hate Mr. Pitt.

concurred with pleasure in putting the French monarchy upon a footing that was certain to end in its destruction before long.

It must also be considered, that the violent party, in quitting their public station, did not quit their power; they were members of the Jacobin club, and, therefore, counted upon preserving that importance which would enable them the first moment of crisis that should arrive, to realise the plans which Bailly and La Fayette had deranged on the 17th of July.

If the conduct of the individuals in a private capacity is to us any rule for judging, we shall find it confirms what we have been saying. The royalists for the most part endeavoured to leave the kingdom under the law about emigration. The *imbeciles* continued to preach up in Paris, and in their provinces, in a public manner, the constitution, all the constitution, and nothing but the constitution.* The ambitious constitutionalists, such as La Fayette, endeavoured to retire from public affairs, and to hide themselves in the provinces, but the republican members remained almost all in Paris, or took the lead in the Jacobin clubs in the provinces, and were the

* These were their words, *La constitution, toute la constitution, et rien que la constitution.*

first to attack the constitution which they had assisted in making.

One of the reproaches justly made to the constituent assembly, is its having separated without making any attempt to arrange and put in order the finances, which were in the most confused and ruinous state possible. As the assembly had been called together expressly to arrange the finances, this neglect is the more inexcusable; but when it is considered that it had augmented beyond all sort of calculation, and beyond any thing of which history gives an example, that disorder we must not speak of as inexcusable, we must say that it was unpardonable.

Astronomers tell us that the moon, which appears so polished and clear, is made of earth, but that the distance produces the deception. Those who have had a good opportunity of minutely examining the conduct of the French constituent assembly, which viewed from a distance appeared to be composed of great men and philosophers, may tell its admirers likewise, that it is the distance that occasions the deception, for that it was composed of ambitious intriguers, and ignorant dupes; and at the present day, there is not a character so completely detested and despised, by all parties, as that of a constitutionalist, whose business, whose pleasure, and whose pride was to pull
down

down and destroy, who ruined every thing and established nothing, and whose whole exertion evaporated in attempting to appear what he never was, the friend of his fellow citizens, and of the liberty and peace of mankind.

CHAP. IX.

New assembly called legislative—Its conduct and temper—The king tormented and ill treated as formerly—His guard dismissed—Jacobins triumph—Red bonnet adopted—Jacobins fill all offices—Republican spirit begins to break out afresh—War declared against the Emperor—Jacobin ministers—The banishment of the non-juring clergy, and a camp of twenty thousand men decreed—The king refuses the sanction—Ministry dismissed—Insurrection of the 20th of June, when the king is insulted—Petion's conduct; he is suspended from the functions of mayor—Petion reinstated—The fæderation—Marseillois arrive in Paris—Pusillanimity of the Parisians—Review of affairs, of the assembly, and of the nation, previous to the fall of the constitution—Fermentation previous to the 10th of August.

THE new assembly, which is distinguished from the former by the name of legislative, was composed of seven hundred and forty-nine members, two thirds of whom were lawyers, a few clergymen, and still fewer proprietors of lands. The remainder was composed of men who lived

as they could, without any settled profession or employment.

As these members were elected by the new method, which gave a vote to every man who paid three livres, or half a crown a year; it is in this place that we ought properly to examine this part of the constitution.

It is very evident that as men must delegate their power to others, as all cannot be employed in governing, the end in view in elections is to choose such men as are most capable of making a proper use of the power with which they are intrusted; or in other words, every nation which has a constitution, is interested in having the parliament or assembly of representatives, by which ever name it may be called, composed of men who are interested in the preservation of the constitution and the general welfare of the state.

With all due submission to theoretical reformers, it is to be presumed that the method which is the most calculated for this end, is the best, whether it happens to correspond with their theories or not; for as in natural philosophy it is a rule to abandon theory the moment that it is contradicted by experiment, so it ought to be in political matters, and experience should be the guide as much as possible; and if necessity obliges

us to have recourse in any unforeseen case to theory, we should endeavour to correct or confirm that theory by experience as speedily as possible.

The people who had a right to vote in elections, were called active citizens, but they had carefully avoided giving any title to the inferior class of people, who, however, soon took to themselves that of passive citizens, and renewed the game of the third estate upon the nobility and clergy.

The rule of determining the right of elections was altogether an arbitrary one, without being either wise or useful, or sanctioned by long habit, as many arbitrary rules are. It left the elections entirely in the hands of the working class of citizens, who greatly outnumbered the proprietors, farmers, and burgeses. One of the first consequences of this was, that the working class insulted and mal-treated the others in the electoral assemblies; and it soon after followed, that these latter entirely withdrew themselves from assemblies, where their presence was of no use to any one, and extremely disagreeable to themselves.*

* The working people took delight in shewing their equality with their masters, and the proprietors of lands in the primary assemblies; and this desire of shewing equality ended always in demonstrating their superiority in point of numbers, and frequently in force.

The

The elections therefore fell entirely into the hands of the petit peuple, assisted by those intriguing spirits who were willing to stoop to take the means of pleasing them. In large towns, the leading members of the clubs were chosen, and in the country such persons as made their court to the populace, but in no instances were men of landed property chosen, and in the legislative assembly there was not one man of independent fortune.

One of the greatest dangers incurred in chusing men who are not in a capacity of living without industry, for representatives, is, that all such by leaving their daily occupations, are ruined, unless during their attendance on the affairs of the nation they can gain what will be sufficient to indemnify them for the loss of their business. Such men are not only to be considered as having a temptation to fill their pockets placed before them, but they may be said with truth to be under a necessity of doing it; accordingly we find they have generally been very careful to do so; and the electors who chose them, cannot complain, or at least do not deserve to be pitied, if they find them more attentive to their own interest than to the interests of the nation.* The pay of eighteen livres a day, given to

* All municipal officers, as well as the judges of the courts of justice, were chosen by the people in the same manner, and they

to the deputies, was scarcely sufficient to defray the expenses * of such as meant to appear with decency; and as the greater part of them had families to maintain, either which they had left in the country, or brought to Paris with them, there was no other alternative but to starve or rob the public. In such a case, a reformer particularly is at no great loss to decide which of the two he ought to do, and accordingly there are very few examples in the three assemblies, which have taken place, of deputies who have neglected their own interests.

From the first meeting of the new assembly, the hopes of the nation that had for a moment been raised, when the constitution was signed, were damped by the captious manner in which the king was treated, and which plainly indicated that there was neither mutual affection nor confidence.

they were all chosen for a limited time, so that it was just like letting loose so many privileged harpies to prey upon the public. With respect to the judges, it was worst of all; they were for six years. Now what man capable of administering impartial justice, would accept of such a place for so long a time, in order to be a beggar afterwards, or at least to have the world to begin again?

* There were some deputies, however, that saved money out of this; these lodged in garrets at five livres a week, and dined at ordinaries at thirty sous a head, that is, they lived like common workmen or inferior clerks,

This

This new assembly, with much more circumscribed powers than the last, had a far more difficult task to perform; they were to establish order and make things go regularly and well; they were not now to put off the happiness of the nation from week to week, and from month to month, when the constitution should be finished; that great last object of hope was already accomplished, and if happiness did not follow, there was nothing for it but to confess that the constitution was a bad one, and to wish for another revolution.

This new assembly, limited in power, and employed in doing what was impossible to be done in France, that is, in establishing order and subordination, was very soon regarded with contempt by the Parisians, who could not find in it any thing of that bold hardy manner for which the former had been so much admired. Novelty and astonishment now no longer diverted the attention from present sufferings; and as we have said before, the time for expecting enjoyment and tranquillity was come, therefore hope also was wanting, and of consequence the decline of public credit, and the increase of mal-content, was at no period of the revolution more rapid than during the first months of the legislative assembly.

There was now nothing to be said in order to appease the people, but that the executive power
was

was to blame, and stood in the way of their happiness. The king was accordingly the perpetual object of complaint and reproach, but without the assembly being able to produce any well-supported, or even probable cause of complaint. As nothing does better for the populace of Paris than suspicion and imaginary crimes, the executive power was soon rendered more obnoxious than ever. The clubs had begun to assume their wonted vigour;* Petion had been chosen mayor of Paris, and the violent system revived with great rapidity, and now without any counterpoise as formerly.

La Fayette had quitted his command of the Parisian guard, and as it had been found so inconvenient to the club to have a national guard to oppose insurrection, which guard might be headed by a moderate man, a decree had been passed that the commandant of the guard should be renewed every two months, so that there would be no time for any † commander to gain a dangerous ascendancy over the minds of the soldiers and officers.

* Besides the Jacobin club, there was a club still more violent, that of the cordeliers; it was in this latter that the plan originated for sending a band of assassins into every country of Europe, called king-killers, on purpose to dispatch the different monarchs. Courage, however, being wanting for such an undertaking, the proposition was applauded but not adopted.

† The commanders of divisions were to command by turns.

Another

Another fusillade was not now to be dreaded, and therefore the fœderalists of the 17th of July began to appear and to hold up their heads.

The constituent assembly had decreed that the king should have a life guard to be paid from the civil list, and wearing an uniform different from the national soldiers. This guard was forming and completing with rapidity, and soon became an object of fear and suspicion to the inhabitants of Paris, who considered them as aristocrats in disguise; and such was the bravery and courage of the Parisians, that a body of only eighteen hundred men was sufficient to cause great alarm and uneasiness; but the assembly had not now the power of destroying what the constitution had made, and therefore it was thought necessary to have recourse to artifice. Early in the year 1792, suspicions were thrown out, and circulated against the intentions of the king, and against the civism of his guards, whom it was not difficult to render odious to the populace, and to the national guards of Paris. When unexplained accusations and rumours, of which no person could trace the origin, had worked up the minds of the Parisians to a state of anger and inquietude, the assembly declared itself permanent, under pretence of a plot which menaced its existence and the safety of the country. The guards of the king were pointed at as being the guilty, and under pretext of punishing them for a crime,

crime, the existence of which was never proved, nor attempted to be proved, the life guards were licenciated, and the Duke de Brissac, their commander, sent to prison at Orleans. This gentleman was known to be unalterably attached to his majesty, and it was a double advantage to send him to a distance, and by keeping him in prison to be tried on a future day, have the appearance as if some charges could actually be brought against him.

At the same time that this plan was carrying on to deprive the king of the only defenders whom the constitution had allowed for his person, M. Brissot, who had so long shewn his hatred to royalty, and who was a member of the assembly, denounced M. de Lessart, the minister of the interior, and had him imprisoned and sent to Orleans; the assembly rendering the decree, and ordering its execution without the constitutional intermediation of the executive power.

It was now that the king was literally obliged to take his enemies into his bosom, by chusing his ministers from the Jacobin club. Dumourier, Roland, Servan, and Claviere, were made the counsellors of their sovereign, and every man who was attached to the royal cause, and who was not blind, foresaw that a new revolution was soon to be expected.

During

During five months which had elapsed since the closing of the constituent assembly, emigration had become more frequent than ever; there remained few of the nobles or proprietors within the kingdom, and the officers of the army and navy had for the most part followed their example.*

France was now become more wretched than at any former period of the revolution—the nobility were gone, the constitution existed, and want and disorder were increasing every day. It was difficult to find any grounds for hope in this state of things, and, accordingly, men had none, and were now prepared for those desperate measures, to which despair alone reconciles the human mind.

In this state of things the Jacobins ruled; but they had one thing still to fear: they found from experience that the proprietors who remained, the master tradesmen, the merchants, and manufacturers of all kinds, were enemies to any new commotions; they had become the first class of men in the present order of things, and, having already gratified their vanity and their vengeance,

* The common soldiers and sailors frequented the Jacobin clubs, and were regularly inscribed in the registers like the other members; so that the commander who would have been hardy enough to have punished any of them, could not long expect to escape a severe vengeance.

had

had nothing to desire so much as to remain and enjoy their victory with permanent tranquillity. To desire peace and preservation of order is to be, according to the French meaning, an aristocrat. So that the democrats of 1789, those same men who had exerted themselves so violently to bring down their superiors, were become the aristocrats of 1792, and employed in studying to preserve order which they had formerly struggled to overturn.

The guards of citizens so highly respected, and so proud of their honours and their epaulets, in the beginning of the revolution, begun to be looked upon with a jealous eye, and even to be despised. The fusillade of last year was not to be forgotten, and the ragged emissaries of the Jacobins begun to arm themselves with pikes, and to form pretensions which evidently tended to the destruction of their aristocratical superiors.

It was hinted to the populace that the passive citizens had equal rights by nature with those to whom the absurd constitution had given the rights of voters and of active citizens; and certainly there was no possibility of contradicting the fact, that if all men were born and remained free and equal, there was an absurdity in giving a full exercise of his rights to the person who paid
fixt

sixty fols of taxes, and refused all his rights to another, because he only paid fifty-nine.

A material consideration is here held up to reformers. Let them beware how they throw out abstract rules, and then vainly think to modify them in the execution, for such a thing never can be done. We might as well think to make a coalition between ornament and mathematics, as between abstract rules and arbitrary regulations.

After the declaration of rights, it was absurd to think that any portion of the inhabitants of the country would be excluded from a full and free participation. If the nobility could not defend the ancient absurdities of the feudal system two years before, it was not to be expected that the new-made aristocrats could now defend the recent absurdities of the constitution. The Jacobins still had in their hands the same arms by which they had pulled down the nobility; they had the non-proprietors, the people who had nothing to lose, at their service,* and it was, as hitherto, the rash
audacity

* It was about this time that the populace adopted the title of Sans Culottes, which had been given by the Aristocrats, at first by way of derision. As they found it impossible to get quit of the name, their leaders thought it better to adopt it, and make it honourable, as had been practised at Avignon with the plunderers, whom they called the Brave Brigands of Avignon. A favourite

audacity of the latter against the cautious timidity of the former.

Another danger menaced the Jacobin faction also. Though, as we have already seen, the constituted authorities were all placed by Jacobins, and rendered almost independent of each other, and of the executive power; yet the position in which they were placed put them, if it were only for self-defence, under the necessity of supporting some degree of order and obedience to the laws; they, therefore, became suspected persons, or aristocrats, and considerable danger was

vourite amusement of the Sans Culottes had been for a long time to go into the convents or churches where religious women or nuns were assembled, and drag them into the street, and there, after exposing them in the most indecent manner, to whip them with rods severely, and sometimes till they became insensible through pain, shame, and loss of blood. This was practised in all quarters of Paris, and most provinces of France. It was thus that laws were obeyed, persons protected, and *liberty* established. M. Necker's indignation broke forth at this, and at a decree that had been made to condemn ministers who had acted unfaithfully to the pillory and the gallies. But the indecent and barbarous custom of whipping ladies had begun on Necker's account, and when he was in full power in Paris, and then he shewed no displeasure, which would have been more useful and honourable than a letter from Switzerland, after he was no longer of any sort of importance. Whilst the rage for whipping was only exerted against ladies who had prophaned Necker's plaister bust, all was well; but when it went any further, then the philosopher must take up the cudgels in favour of modesty and liberty of opinions.

to be apprehended from a general union of effort in the cause of order, arising from a general union of interest; for, although Petion was mayor of Paris, and Manuel and Danton were officers under him, yet the spirit of the common council was by no means such, as enabled them to count upon the co-operation even of the municipality of Paris, much less upon those of the other cities in the kingdom.

The disorder in which every thing was, did not permit delay, for it was evident that the present state of affairs could not continue long; it was, therefore, probable that the victory would remain to the most enterprising and active.

The Jacobin club now counted amongst its members all the leading men of the assembly and the ministers, and it was now they adopted the red cap of liberty, with an intention to try their force; but as it did not muster so strong as it was expected, the mayor Petion, under pretext of preventing disorder, represented to the club that it was imprudent to count their friends in this manner, for that the aristocrats would probably adopt the new head-dress, and so screen themselves from their just anger. Red bonnets were then less generally worn, and the wisdom and moderation of the mayor were applauded by those who did not know that, if his party had appeared

more numerous, such an harangue would never have been pronounced.

During the same period the assembly decreed that the non-juring priests, whom they now called refractory priests, should be banished from the kingdom, and that the lands and effects of all persons who had emigrated should belong to the nation.

As both of these decrees were not only in themselves unjust, but were contrary to the constitution which the king and the assembly had sworn to execute and obey, his majesty was justified in a double manner in refusing his sanction; but this did not screen him from the reproach of of the Jacobins, and the displeasure of the assembly.

At the same time that all these causes for internal disputes were starting up day after day, the new ministers procured a declaration of war against the Emperor, and the King of Prussia, on account of the treaty of Pilnitz,* and the permission

* This treaty of Pilnitz was an agreement, in case of necessity, to maintain the liberty of Louis XVI. and the independence of other kingdoms.

The Emperor was treated in the discourses from the tribune with all manner of contempt and indignity. He is a droll fellow,

mission granted to the emigrants at Coblenz to enrol themselves in a military manner.

It would require a very long discussion to enter minutely and completely into the origin of the war, but that is the less necessary, as the assembly by its daily conduct had plainly shewn that war was what they wanted, and the death of the Emperor Leopold seemed an excellent occasion for beginning, when his successor was only King of Hungary and Bohemia, and Duke of Brabant by hereditary possession, but could not, until the usual slow ceremony of election should be over, act with the united forces of the empire.

Dumourier was minister at war when the decree was passed, and, by virtue of the new system of honour and of liberty which France had adopted, the messenger of the Imperial ambassador was detained in Paris till the fourth day after; and it is a fact, that the frontiers of Austrian Flanders were attacked before the letters

fell, that Emperor, said M. Isnard, (the Barnave of the new assembly—*un plaisant garçon*) and the titles of despot, &c. &c. were applied without any sort of ceremony to all the crowned heads of Europe.

The rabble had made a procession with a head, which they called the Emperor's, through the gardens of the Thuilleries, and had carried it under the windows of the queen. This was just a few days before the Emperor's death.

containing a declaration of war had been dispatched from Paris.

It is not at all our province or intention to enter into any military details. The little success which attended this first expedition is well known, as is also the cruel and unfortunate end of General Dillon, who, not having been successful, was suspected by his soldiers, and cut in pieces with that same savage fury which the Parisian cannibals had been accustomed to display.

The declaration of war was followed with a decree to order off some troops of the line from Paris, who were suspected of incivism, that is to say, of attachment to the royal cause.

The Jacobins were now without any regular opponents; but, as they could not be certain how the Parisian guards might act, most of whom were attached to the constitution, they wished to have a regular army at their command, and, therefore, decreed a camp of twenty thousand men, which should be collected from the whole of the kingdom,* and assembled under the walls of Paris;

* It had always been the practice of the Jacobins to hurry through such decrees as they thought likely to meet with opposition; so that the weightiest subjects were always determined with the slightest discussion; the abolition of feudal rights and

Paris; and as the manner in which this camp was to be composed of fans culottes from the different departments was no secret, it was considered as the total overthrow of kingly power.

One of the Jacobin ministers had, without the king's orders, demanded this camp, and all his ministers had been privy to the demand; there was only one mode of resistance considered as possible for his majesty, consistent with the constitution,* this was to refuse the sanction, and to dismiss the ministers by whom he had been betrayed.

Thus did part of the plan of the Jacobins receive a momentary check, but it was only momentary.

It is impossible to conceive how the different governments of Europe, who had ambassadors at Paris, should have remained ignorant of those preparations for destroying the French monarchy; or if they were not ignorant, how they remained inactive, and thereby let slip the last opportunity

of nobility had been done without a moment's reflection or discussion. The arrest of one of the ministers had been demanded and executed in a few hours; and this camp was decreed in the same manner, without previous notice or any discussion.

* The king alone was perfectly faithful to this code, and kept always in his apartments a copy of it, which he made his rule of conduct on all occasions.

of making an effort to prevent the catastrophe that was so evidently preparing, and which, when once brought on, it would be so difficult to remedy.

From the beginning of the revolution till this present hour the nations of Europe have been too slow in all their efforts against the levelling system. Before they have been warned of the danger and prepared for defence, the manner of attack has been changed by their able and vigorous adversaries, who have thereby triumphed over superior force, and far superior means, by address, activity, and energy.

If that energy on their side continues, and we continue our slow and calm pace, the contest will certainly be decided against us, and before many years pass over, kings and proprietors will sink under the attacks of audacious and active indigence.

Dumourier, turned out of the ministry, went off immediately to the frontiers, and soon obtained that superiority over La Fayette, Luckner, and Dillon,* which a man of genius so easily

* There were two generals of the name of Dillon; the one, as we have seen, had already been massacred, and this other Dillon was reserved for the guillotine, having been since included in one of the imaginary plots against Robespierre.

acquires over men who have none, and which an audacious Jacobin acquires still more easily over a filly supporter of the French constitution.

Roland, surnamed the virtuous by the Jacobin faction, and who, since then, signed the death warrant of the king his master, and finished his worthy career by cutting his own throat, published a letter to the king on being dismissed, which is a model for its insolence, and the contents of which were in total opposition to the constitution.

Claviere, another of the ministers, retired in silence, but not to sit idle ; things were too far advanced to remain long without an open rupture ; and since the camp of twenty thousand men could not be had, it was resolved by the dismissed ministers and the mayor to have twenty thousand men without a camp.

A petition to the assembly served as the pretext for collecting all the rabble from the different quarters of Paris, who, in place of coming peaceably as petitioners ought to do, came armed, and defiled through the hall of the assembly with pikes, pitchforks, scythes, axes, and clubs. The assembly, which in fact was accessory to this breach of the constitutional laws, applauded the lawless and unruly procession, which passed to

the king's palace, before which there were more than six thousand of the national guards in arms.

Petion, the virtuous mayor of Paris, was absent,* so that no orders could be given for opposing force to force, and the national guards stood lookers on, while this multitude assailed the palace, and entered by violence into the apartments of his majesty.

The avowed intention of the populace was to oblige the king, through fear, to sanction the decrees for the banishment of ecclesiastics and the camp of twenty thousand men. The firmness of his majesty, who had, without fear or delay, presented himself to the enraged multitude, defeated the Jacobin projects once more. The decrees were not sanctioned, the king acquired the esteem of all men who love courage and virtue, and the leaders of the mob were covered with eternal disgrace.†

* This mob was expected, and the object was known, therefore Petion's absence was intended. He, as well as Roland, was called always the virtuous.

† Petion arrived *calmly* in his carriage from Versailles, (where he had been, nobody knows for what) after the business was nearly over, and when nothing more could be gained by remaining, he and Santerre, the brewer, dismissed their ragged auxiliaries till another occasion.

The

The constitution, which all the nation had so often sworn to maintain, was thus openly violated, and every one plainly saw, that whether the king were considered as a public functionary or a private man, the attack upon his house and person were equally illegal and unjust.

The members of the common council, and of the department, disapproved of what had happened; and as the part which Petion, as mayor, had acted, was too visible to be vindicated, the department suspended him from his functions. All the constituted authorities seemed to have gained courage and fortitude from the firmness of the king, and there was once more some reason to hope, that he would meet with support and protection.

La Fayette, at that time general of one of the armies on the frontiers, and attached to the constitution, but, above all, enraged to see the king, his former prisoner, ill treated by any mob where he himself was not present, left his army without asking leave of absence, and unexpectedly presented himself at the bar of the assembly, to complain, in the name of his army, of the insult offered to the constitutional head of the nation.*

This

* These constitutionalists are undefinable men; Was this 20th of June, when the king was attacked in his palace, any worse

This step of La Fayette announced a determination that gave the royalist party some hopes ; but the leaders of the Jacobins knew what sort of a man they had to deal with, and La Fayette was glad to quit Paris next day, without any farther effort than that of empty declamation and menace, after having left his army without leave, and shewn a disposition to defend the constitution and his want of force and of means to do it.

This feeble and imprudent step of La Fayette served to shew the factions at Paris, that they had nothing to fear from the armies ; and the Jacobin club, and all the papers that were devoted to its cause, were let loose upon La Fayette and the defenders of the constitution with double vigour.

During the suspension of Petion from the office of mayor * he had been employed in writing a short pamphlet, entitled, *General Rules of my Conduct towards the People*. In this production he declared, it had always been his determination

worse than the 5th of October, or than the mob that prevented the royal family from going to St. Cloud, at both of which M. de la Fayette assisted ?

* The king was obliged, according to the constitution, to confirm or reject this, and all such depositions of municipal officers by the departments. He wished, through delicacy, not to exercise his power in this case, where he was in reality a party concerned, but being obliged to decide he confirmed the suspension.

never to let the blood of the people be shed, and he shewed, that the peaceable and factious were considered by him in the same light; and that any extravagances or violation of justice which they might commit would be considered as errors only and not as crimes.

Such a declaration was a sufficient motive for the disturbers of public repose to redouble their efforts in order to have him re-instated, and in every quarter of Paris the Jacobins cried out, *Pétion ou la mort.*

Though the camp of twenty thousand men could not at present be established, yet, as the third anniversary of the revolution approached, and as it was necessary to recruit the armies, the Jacobin leaders found a pretext for inviting to Paris fédérates from all parts of France, and amongst others from Marseilles, from whence came a number of robbers and murderers by profession, who had been particularly active in the massacres at Avignon; but these latter arrived too late for the fœderation, and those who came were not sufficiently ripe in mischief to execute any great or bold exploit; so that the fœderation passed over quietly, only with this point gained, that to insure peace and tranquillity the king and the department had tamely submitted to the re-instatement of Petion as mayor of Paris.

This

This foederation was the triumph of the enemies of the constitution, as the two former ones had been of the constitution itself, the cries of *vive la constitution* were changed for *vive Petion*, and many cried VIVE LA MORT,

As the war now begun to take a serious turn, and as the state of the interior was so worked up, that it was impossible long to prevent an open war between the two parties, in which it was pretty clear, that all well-minded and peaceable citizens would support the king, the ruling party in the assembly hit upon a plan towards the end of July of insuring themselves success.

A decree was passed, declaring the *country in danger*, and rendering permanent all the assemblies of sections, municipalities, and départements; by which means any number of members who chose to make an appointment at an uncommon hour for deliberating, might pass what resolutions they pleased, and overturn every thing. This was so absurd a thing, and so diametrically opposite to common sense, that if it had not soon after been employed to overturn the whole order of things, we could scarcely expect that it could meet with credit, but the extraordinary proceedings of the night that preceded the 10th of August are a too certain evidence of the fact.

The

The arrival of the Marsellois, who were not in number above 400, put the bravery of the gallant national guards of Paris to the proof; 32,000 brave burgeses, armed and equipped, and who boasted for their first exploit the taking of the Bastile, trembled before this handful of determined ruffians.

The Marsellois entered Paris at the Barriere du trone,* and traversed the city till they came to the assembly. Though this banditti were fatigued with a long journey, and with very bad treatment from the national guards of some of the towns through which they had passed, they began by obliging every person they met in Paris to change their cockades made of silk for others made of worsted. They overturned in their way all the stalls where silk cockades were sold, and the 32,000 guards complained, that it was very hard that strangers should come from a distance, and oblige them to wear a cockade they did not chuse, and when the constitution made no difference between silk and worsted, provided the colours were national.

It was a scene that afforded great matter for reflection, to see the armed Parisians, who had made all Europe resound with their democratic

* This was as if a body of men were to enter London by Whitechapel, and to pass to St. James's or Hyde Park.

bravery for three years, collect themselves into groups, and seriously complain of the cavalier treatment of a small party of banditti.*

After having paid their homage to the assembly, where they were received with applause,† the Marsellois went to a tavern in the Elysian-fields, where Santerre, the intended commander of the Parisian guards, entertained them, and where near an hundred of the officers of the Parisian guards were also dining. A quarrel was suddenly stirred up, and the effeminate Parisians were put to flight, with the loss of one killed, five wounded, and two taken prisoners. Chance might account for the dead and wounded, but that 400 men should carry off prisoners in the face of 32,000 of their companions, is a novelty that cannot be so easily accounted for. The whole of the Parisians were in arms directly, they paraded and prepared for action, but durst do no more. Thus did au-

* Notwithstanding all these murmurs and complaints, the vain Parisians adopted the worsted cockade before the evening of that day.

† This band of Marsellois waited on M. Petion before they went to the assembly, and were well received by him, whose duty would have been to chase them out of the city, as had been done at Lyons and several other places, and even at Melun, which is but a very small place. The brave brigands consoled themselves for the ill-treatment they received in the towns by pillaging and oppressing the country peasants, and ravishing such defenceless women as fell in their way.

dacity

dacity, and four hundred sabres gain a victory over pusillanimity with an hundred and twenty cannons and thirty-two thousand bayonets; and on the very spot where the Prince de Lambesc three years ago had let sticks and stones triumph over a regular army. It was on this spot that the Parisian burghers triumphed over the regular army of the sovereign; and it was here that a handful of the lowest class of the people triumphed over the Parisian burghers. The triumph was complete in the latter case, the moment that audacious indigence found that the defenders of law and property were feeble and undecided.

The Jacobin club was the next that received the homage and fraternal visit of the banditti of Marseilles, who became a part of the club itself, and, like the assembly of the nation, were by this means both a deliberating and executive body.*

The passive citizens, those who had not beds to lay upon nor breeches to wear, and who paid no taxes, had now a point of rallyment, and did not want instigators; so that the complaints against the constitution multiplied and became loud, and its destruction became easy.

* After the tenth of August, as the assembly was merely a passive instrument, it could not be looked upon as an assembly deliberating.

As we already approach the last moments of the legislative assembly, it is necessary to give some attention to its composition. The first assembly had, as we have seen, been divided into three parties, this was divided into four. The partisans of the constitution were now called the moderates, and occupied the same end of the hall, on the right hand of the president, where the aristocrats used to sit. On the left extremity, formerly occupied by those who raised the constitution, sat those republicans who were determined to pull it down; this end was called the mountain; immediately under which, and near the middle of the hall, were Brissot, Condorcet, and the Girond party, who were the conductors of the assembly, who combined, assorted, and balanced the different interests, so as to undermine the constitution, for which they had a most sovereign contempt. The fourth division of the assembly was also seated near the middle; these last called themselves independents, and, without having any particular views of change, were not much attached to the constitution.

The members of the Jacobin club associated with none but the men of the mountain, or the Girondists,* who were all of them members of the club,

* This party called Girondists was composed of the deputies from Bourdeaux and the borders of the Garron; that is to say, they

club, in which the measures to be adopted by the assembly were first debated; so that the club was now actually become the legislating body for the whole of France, and this under the name of liberty.

Though the assembly was divided into four parts capable of dividing or uniting, yet we shall hereafter see that, when under the influence of fear the whole assembly became as one, and that when fear ceased to operate, they divided again; but that at all times the parties bore that hatred for each other, which opposes so invincible a barrier to the peace and happiness of France.

Before we quit the *first* revolution of France which gained so many admirers all over Europe, which is still with some an object of admiration, let us take a view of the state to which it had reduced the country; let us examine the evils it had produced, and the blessings it had procured.

The first of the evils was the principle of insubordination, which, soon becoming general, rendered order and government impracticable; and, instead

they were Gascons, a name better understood, and by no means misapplied in the present case. It was Brissot and that party who wanted to conquer the whole world, and establish a central assembly at Paris.

D d

of

of leading to freedom, led directly to anarchy. The substituting a vain and illusive philosophy for the maxims of common sense and experience, opened a door for error and for crimes which are its natural consequences, and which must pervert several generations, and prolong the miseries of the country. Sophisms put into the mouths of working men, who are not capable of seeing the danger to which they conduct,* give a wrong turn to the mind, which ceases to be capable of distinguishing moral truths from moral deceptions, and right from wrong; and thus the conscience of man, and that preference given by our nature to what is just, over what is unjust, deprives us of the most solid foundation which our Creator has laid for our preservation and happiness.

The substitution of reason for religion was another fund of mischief. Reason should purify, but not destroy religion, which is the only check upon the passions of men, by holding up to all, the hope of reward and fear of punishment; by giving support in adversity, and moderation in

* As for example, the people were at first told that the nobility and privileged people were *so numerous*, that they devoured every thing. Under this idea they revolted, and when the cidevant privileged persons demanded justice, or at least compassion, they said, that *so small a portion* of the nation did not merit attention.

prosperity.

prosperity.* The man who hopes for a future reward, or fears a future punishment, is as attentive to his conduct in a desert, and without witnesses, as when surrounded with the officers of justice of a great city. Those who consider death as an eternal sleep have nothing to consult but their appetites and their will; for, as their lot is to be like that of the brutes that perish, so also will their conduct naturally be. Public insubordination and private injustice are the natural consequences of the derangement of mind which took place with the French revolution, and with which the world will always have to reproach the framers of the French constitution.

We have seen the evils of their principles; let us now review the consequences of their administration.

The people had become poorer and more miserable since they paid no more feudal rents, nor

* The manner in which the savage philosophers of the revolution have acted with regard to each other and to themselves, is a striking example of this. Never was there less moderation nor less humanity shewn by the chiefs of faction to each other. Men who had acted together as friends became suddenly the most implacable enemies; and so sensible were those who sunk in the struggle that no mercy was to be expected, that many of them have put an end to their own miserable existence. Such is the conduct of men when mercy and hope are banished from the human breast.

any more tythes to the clergy; and the nation had become greatly more indebted than ever since it had seized the lands of the church.* The nobility had been humiliated to gratify the vanity of bankers and burgesſes, and the bankers and burgesſes were more humiliated than ever by being obliged to cringe to the off-scourings of the nation.†

Commercial men had been pillaged that the poor might have plenty, and the poor were in greater want than ever of every neceſſary of life. The duty on the entrance of towns had been taken off commodities to render them cheap, and they had become dearer than before.‡ The power

* The assignats already iſſued amounted to more than the whole value of the church lands; and the annual ſum which the nation was bound to pay as ſalaries to the clergy, was about five millions ſterling, or rather more.

† In private tranſactions the bold and violent reduced the reſpectable citizen to ſilence; and in every public aſſembly the advantage in point of numbers was ſo great in favour of the former, that the latter were fain to conceal their inferiority by keeping themſelves away.

‡ In Paris the articles of life were dearer than ever; wine that uſed only to coſt ten ſols coſt now fourteen or fifteen; and according to the expectation before the duties were taken off, it ought to have been reduced to five or fix ſols; other articles were in the ſame proportion. The reaſon was, that assignats and anarchy were ſo great enemies to induſtry, that the conſumption of every neceſſary of life exceeded the produce.

of arbitrary imprisonment had been snatched from the hands of *one* monarch, and it was now exercised by *forty-seven thousand municipal officers*. The liberty of the press had been granted to all by a decree, but every word written or spoken against the general will* was a crime of the deepest die, and never was liberty of opinion less enjoyed.

All religions had been permitted by a decree, but the religious of all sorts were insulted and oppressed; and, to conclude with all in one sentence, liberty had been decreed, but men were neither free to speak nor dress, except in the way that pleased the rulers of the Jacobins. Suspicion was as dangerous as conviction; denunciation was amongst the number of the patriotic duties of a citizen; it was become dangerous to be obnoxious, but not dangerous to be guilty.† Rags had become honourable and ragamuffins powerful, and industry and arrangement were banished from the face of that miserable country. Poverty,

* This was a very ingenious contrivance to correct the principle of insurrection and sedition, which were protected and encouraged under their former names, but were repressed as disobedience *à la volonté generale*.

† The criminal and civil codes were to be altered, and juries had been instituted, but justice had never taken its course. In party matters every thing went by the spirit of the times.

discontent, and misery, had come to such a pitch under this complication of evils, that the still voice of reason could no longer be heard, nor the mighty promises of the saviours of the nation be believed; it was, therefore, necessary and natural to have recourse to the remedy of insurrection; the miseries of the people had begun with one, and they were taught to think, that another might bring them to an end.

The general practice of the revolutionists has been to ask a little in order to take a great deal, and to promise a great deal and perform very little; by this double deception the moderate party was then made dupes, and constrained often to assist in doing what they did not approve of, but which they found themselves forced to do by necessity.

We have already seen the rapidity of that progress which men make in crimes, as soon as they have thrown off a regard for those rules which have, in civilised nations, been considered as the foundation of order and happiness; whoever will take the trouble to consider the consequences to which the declaration of rights led, and the impossibility which the legislative power experienced of reconciling their general principles to practice, will be convinced, that men should be very careful how they adopt such general principles; and
that

that if modifications are necessary, it should be in the declaration of rights itself, and not in the application of them to practice.

The rights of savages is one thing, and the rights of men in civilised society another. Unluckily for the first promoters of insurrection, they mistook the one for the other, and promulgated the code in France, which might have done amongst some of the inhabitants of the forests of America, but which was totally unfit for any nation where regular government is established, and wealth accumulated by the industry of our ancestors;* and after once ostentatiously promulgated that code, they had the vanity and folly to think, that it would be possible to set bounds to its application.

This folly was most conspicuous in the law respecting the rights of voters in the primary as-

* Far as the levelling principles have been attempted to be carried, their ultimate extent is not yet known, or, at least, has not been applied. If posterity are not bound by what their predecessors have done, why are the creditors of the state paid interest or reimbursed their capitals? What right has one man to exact rent from another for a house, which he himself neither built nor purchased, but which came to him by inheritance? According to the principles of the revolutionists applied in a pure manner, property would no more descend than personal virtue or vice; and no man would have a right to any thing which he had not made, or purchased with the fruits of his own labours.

semblies for elections; and at the time we are speaking, the clamour of the passive citizens, who had no votes, became daily more and more serious, so that it was very evident, that the constitution would not long exist.

The friends of the constitution were now treated something in the same way that the friends of the ancient government had been treated three years before; the attachment which they professed to order and principle was called aristocracy; the rich merchants were all accused of monopoly; and to be a proprietor of a great magazine of sugar or coffee, was as great a crime in 1792 as to be lord of a castle was in 1789.

A ragged coat was now become more honourable than the embroidered epaulet, which the citizens of Paris honoured and respected so much in the first days of the revolution. The citizens now began to feel what it was to flatter the rabble, and to accustom and encourage them to attack property; even Petion had complained, that he had been placed between the people and his duty;* and those who had applauded the destruction of feudal rights and gentlemen's castles, murmured and complained when the grocer's shops were pillaged.

* *Entre son devoir et le bon peuple.*

Things were in this state of disorder when the Jacobin party, finding that La Fayette had not ventured to attempt any thing vigorous, and that, therefore, the armies on the frontiers were not to be considered as likely to offer any serious opposition to their designs, determined to push on boldly, to either sink under their enemies, or to crush the constitution and the royal family.

The king had been induced to shut up the garden of the Thuilleries, on account of the perpetual mobs of people who assembled there, and who insulted every person belonging to the royal family who appeared in it. The queen had been insulted in one of the walks, and the audacious and ungenerous populace were perpetually under the windows of the king's apartments, loading him with insults and injuries;* and none of those persons who were attached to his majesty's person or family could visit the palace in peace and safety.

* One of the methods of insult consisted in accusing the queen of every abominable crime; another, in singing songs where the king was treated with insolence and ridicule; the chorus of one of these will serve as a specimen,

Nous te traiterons, gros Louis

Biribi,

A la façon de Barbari

Mon ami

The

The assembly, contrary to every principle of right, determined, that though the garden belonged to his majesty, yet the terrace on the side next the assembly belonged to the nation. The consequence of this was, that the doors were opened, and the nation occupied its terrace; and the populace were stirred up to dislike the king more than ever by an invidious and unmeaning distinction,* to excite which was the real end in view, as the simple possession of a terrace was not in itself any object, particularly when the constitution and the contract between the nation and the king was to be violated in order to obtain it. This succeeded as the Jacobins could wish; the king attracted the fury which individual misery and disappointment occasioned, and which should have been directed against the assembly.

The country having been declared in danger, and all the sections and other assemblies permanent, the moment for explosion was ready, it

* This decree was so ridiculous, that though the assembly desired nothing more sincerely than to pass it, yet one or two members opposed it with such solid arguments, that the motion was on the point of being thrown out, when the mob in the galleries, by menaces and noise, silenced the opposers, and obliged them to pass the decree.

only became necessary to assign a motive and to give a signal.*

The comedian, Collot d'Herbois, since then become more famous, and a poet of the name of Chenier, put themselves at the head of the passive citizens on the sections, and demanded the deposition of the king. The active citizens protested against the legality of such petitions, and a week was spent in hearing petitions and protests, in that assembly, which, as guardian of the constitution, ought to have punished severely, or, at least, refused to listen to the petitioners, who in proposing the deposition of the king, proposed the destruction of the constitution.

When a week had been past in this manner, to save time the *insurgent commissaries* of the sections employed Petion to present a general petition in the name of all the sections, and the insolent mayor of Paris revenged himself against his sovereign by formally demanding his *suspension*.† This

* When the country was declared in danger, a decree was made to arm the whole mass of the people, but as muskets could not be procured for so many, it was decreed that they should be armed *with pikes*.

† Jacobins never call things by their true names. Suspension seemed to imply a momentary cessation of those functions which it was, however, firmly determined the unfortunate monarch should never again exercise.

petition, for which Petion certainly merited the severest punishment, was applauded, ordered to be printed, and sent to the eighty-three departments.

A committee of twelve members, composed of the Girondist party, was named to examine into the important, but illegal question. The danger of pronouncing was thought so great, that the report was retarded from day to day, and, in fact, never given, as the question was decided soon after by the insurrection of the 10th of August.

La Fayette had been accused in the assembly, for his journey to Paris ; the double charge of deserting his post as commander, and of aiming at becoming protector in France, was brought against him, and contrary to the expectations of every one who knew any thing of the disposition of the assembly, he was absolved by a considerable majority. Those deputies who had spoken in his favour, were beat by the populace and dragged in the kennel. The insurrection was once more employed against the man who had first given it a sanction,* and the constitution

* Æsop, perhaps, had a view to La Fayette when he wrote the fable of the boy who bit off his mother's ear when he was going to be hanged. If you had corrected me for the first offence, said he, I should not now have been here.

violated in attacking the members of the assembly for their opinions in favour of its author.

Various attempts were made to render victory more secure, by obliging the king to send off the only troops that now remained to protect his person. The regiment of Swiss guards, composed originally of twenty-two hundred men, was reduced to between fifteen and sixteen hundred; The king refused, or at least delayed sending them all away, and only sent three hundred into Normandy; a few remained in their barracks, at seven or eight miles distance from town, some were sick, and some absent, so that officers and men included, there remained about nine hundred at the palace of the Thuilleries.

During this regular operation of preparing the people for attack, and rendering the king incapable of defence, which in point of manœuvre yields to no military tactics whatever, the approach of the Duke of Brunswick and the Prussian army added a stimulus to the attacking party.

The brigands from Marseilles had been transferred from their first barracks, which were in one of the suburbs, to the section of the Cordeliers; there they were near the center of the city, and positively in the most revolutionary quarter of Paris:

as

as this change took place during the night, its object could not be considered as a very legitimate one.

On the 7th of August regular plans began to be laid for attacking the palace. It is not our intention nor our business to enter into all the details which are pretty generally and well known; we shall be contented with shewing, as hitherto, the perfidious manœuvres of the revolutionary party to obtain victory, and their crimes and cruelties when it has been obtained.

We have already seen that the revolution has totally changed both men and measures. That what we alledged to be true concerning the danger of its first principles, is confirmed by experience; that the gradual steps from insurrection to settle their first rights, and then to overturn them, has been not only a natural but necessary consequence of the setting out on false grounds at first. What we have now to see, is rather the crimes than the manœuvres of the revolution; the first are nearly over, because there will shortly remain no enemy against whom they can manœuvre. All principle, all plan of government, and all law being from the 10th of August at an end, it became a perpetual conflict of parties at war with each other for power, but not for principles.

With

With the phantom of a constitution, every thing capable of captivating opinion in neighbouring nations was at an end ; but the rulers got possession of riches, and the hireling tribe were all at their service. Till this second means of troubling the repose of Europe shall be wrested from them also, they will still be formidable.*

Never had the approaches of a besieged city been carried with more art and skill than the attack upon the king in the palace of the Thuilleries. We have seen that his guards have been dismissed, his confidential servants imprisoned, or frightened away ; royalty had been already degraded in the eyes of a turbulent populace, and the armed force of Paris, which might have made some effort in his favour, had been disorganised, and, to crown all, was under the command of Petion, the most cruel and revengeful of all the king's servants.

It was well known at the palace and in the assembly, that an attack was meditated, but

* Those who calculate on the duration of the revolution, should attentively consider, that while they can create assignats in France, and with a ream of paper pay for the building of a hundred gun ship ; and with another ream send ten thousand men into the field, that country must be formidable ; but by degrees the impossibility of such exertions approaches, and we may from that moment expect the return of something like order, for crimes will then cost money.

no effort was made by his Majesty [*Note K.*] to do any thing more than what self defence entitles every man to do, and what as first magistrate of the nation the constitution made it his duty to do. The calumnies upon that head are all long since done away, if to have consulted personal safety, by all the means in his power, could be any foundation for accusation.

Insurrection, holy insurrection, was the only way to get rid of the king and the constitution, and on the 9th of August the procureur syndic of the department of Paris, M. Rædever, announced to the assembly that it was preparing. Petion appeared at the bar, and was interrogated as to the state of the people ; he declared that they were very discontented, and mutinously disposed. The project of firing the cannon of alarm, and founding the tocsin, were announced, yet the mayor, who had the whole national guards at his command, and the cannon of alarm, as well as the tocsin, in his power, spoke as if he could not find any means to prevent what he pretended to fear.

Never was a more complete imposition attempted to be practised upon mankind, than to examine the mayor about his means of preventing what it was well known he was occupied in preparing ;

paring ;* nor never did any people let themselves in so dastardly a manner be juggled out of a constitution, which with all its faults they still wished to maintain. The dispositions, as well as the conduct of Petion, were well known, and the national guards ought to have chosen a chief who would give them permission to act. If it was lawful to rebel, *they should have rebelled against the mayor* when he refused to let them carry arms without particular orders, except in their own sections, while the rabble, supe-

* Besides all the other proofs, the petition for suspending the king, presented by Petion, and sent to the eighty-three departments by a decree of the assembly, was a plain and well authenticated proof of his and their wishes, particularly, as of forty-eight sections, twenty-two had protested against the petition, and no notice had been taken of their protest ; besides, the sending to the eighty-three départements was either to influence their opinion, or to know their will ; if it had been this latter, the assembly should have addressed the people of Paris to demand peace and a suspension of their plans, until the views of the departments should be known ; but this would not have answered their purpose, for a great majority throughout France was for the king and the constitution. The reveries about the republics of Condorcet and Brissot had not made great progress in the provinces. They were not so well adapted for seducing the opinion of the lower class as the principles of the first assembly ; and it was only by decorating the name of republic with the word equality, that it went down at all. It is to be presumed, when the discovery shall have penetrated into France, that men are not more equal under a republic than under a monarchy, their illusion will vanish, and they will see things in their true colours.

rior to all orders, were preparing to attack the palace.

Here is a good and awful lesson for those men who are foolish enough to oppose law to revolt and rebellion, when they should only oppose force. The constitution, which all France had repeatedly sworn to maintain, was going to be openly attacked by an armed rabble, and the soldiers of that constitution, attached to it by duty by principle, and by oaths, in obedience to one of its regulations, which said that the mayor was to give command to the military, without which it could never act, stood peaceably by, and let the whole be overturned.

For men so stupid or so pusillanimous it was not worth while to make laws, nor establish principles, for they were incapable of applying them when made, or of protecting them from destruction.

It has already been said that the council-general of the Hotel de Ville was disposed to support the constitution and the king; and as Petion was obliged to obey this council, he began by deceiving it till the hour should arrive when he might act for himself. The mayor, in order to prevent the council and the department, both of which were superior to him, from penetrating his designs, or at least

least from having any pretext for superseding him in his authority, stationed some troops to defend the palace, and gave an order in writing to M. Mandat, the commander of that guard, to oppose force to force, should the palace be attacked.*

The council at the Hotel de Ville was permanent, like all the other assemblies, but in the present crisis was better attended than the others. The assemblies of the forty-eight sections were permanent by law, but could not be said to be so in fact, for most of the citizens were, as national guards, occupied at different posts in their respective quarters of the city.† At twelve o'clock at night a body of those men who were determined to destroy the constitution, separated from a meeting which they had held; a few of them went to each of the forty-eight sections, and instantly taking possession of the books and pa-

* This order has been considered by some as a proof that Petion really meant to exert himself against the people. But it is evident that it was only given as a blind to the opposite party, as the first thing done was to get possession of that order, and to destroy it. Petion was apparently under the greatest anxiety till he knew that this order was destroyed.

† The king's ministers had applied to the national assembly for a decree that would permit the national guards to rally themselves wherever danger might require; but Petion opposed this proposition, so that this measure so necessary for public security was stifled at the very moment it was most necessary.

pers, suspended their deputies in the general council at the Hotel de Ville, and named some of themselves in their place: those new deputies set off immediately, and by violence expelled such members of the council as were there. Petion the mayor, Manuel, and Danton alone, were not suspended.*

By this sudden, violent, and illegal step, all opposition from the common council was prevented; and the virtuous Petion had colleagues with whom he could act, and from whom he was certain of assistance.

The first use made of their new power by those intruders, was to send for M. Mandat, the commander of the guards stationed at the palace. The unfortunate Mandat, undecided between his duty to his sovereign and his obedience to the town council, hesitated to obey, although totally ignorant of the change that had

* The suspended deputies were ordered to return quietly to their respective homes, and to say nothing. This is the mode that highwaymen dismiss those whom they have robbed. Perhaps, without this injunction, enforced by threats, some of the members might have gone to the palace and disclosed what had happened, which, if they had done, Mandat would not have obeyed; and, perhaps, the department might have taken some violent measures, for there was yet an interval of six hours to be dreaded by the new magistrates, before their forces, the rabble, should be fairly on their march.

taken place. He was sent for a second time, and with reluctance obeyed. When arrived at the Hotel de Ville, he was interrogated, treated like a criminal, and ordered to prison; on descending the stairs, under a guard, his brains were blown out, and his body thrown into the river.* By this murder the order of Petion, to oppose force to force, was suppressed, and the few guards who were at the palace were left without any commander, and without knowing what was become of him, or who to obey.

Let those who cry out perpetually for assemblies of the people think of this, and consider with what facility a very few, and those the most worthless of the people, by assuming the name of the whole at the hour of midnight, overturned the constitution by depriving its anointed king of the only means of protection which he had left; never after this let the signal given by the infamous Charles IX. from the tocsin of the Louvre, be cited as an example of kingly government, without joining to it the signal

* The order of Petion was searched for, was found, and destroyed. This is a clear proof, if any were wanting, that the whole was concerted between the new municipality and the mayor, otherwise they could not have known that such an order existed. It proves also, that to destroy that order was one of the chief motives for killing the unfortunate commander,

which at this hour was heard from the cathedral of Notre Dame,* as an example of what the leaders of the people are capable of doing.

During all this time, the audacious Marfellois were assembling and leading on the insurgents, collected from all quarters of Paris, and composed of the lowest of the people, but chiefly from the Fauxbourgs St. Antoine,† and St. Marceau.

A part of this banditti, armed with pikes, arrived at the Place de Caroufelle, behind the palace, at about seven in the morning, and obtained admission into the court, by pretending to come for the protection of the king; but this army of pikemen was no sooner admitted, than it manifested a very different intention, and be-

* It is not pretended that the carnage of the 10th of August was equal to that of the St. Barthelemy for the number of its victims, but it was fully equal for the cruelties exercised, and was brought about by an abuse of power (unwarrantably seized upon by men who called themselves representatives of the people) full as flagrant as that of Charles IX. the one is an example of the crimes of monarchical, and the other of popular government, but they are equally odious.

† These were always the quarters of the city famous for *petit peuple*, something like St. Giles's and Seven Dials in London. St. Antoine is by much the most extensive, and furnished three times as many as the other; the whole amounted to about twenty thousand. The democrats of the first assembly had flattered the St. Antoine heroes by calling it the Fauxbourg de Gloire.

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gan to pervert the spirit of the national guards, who had been there during the night.

With so many precautions and manœuvres to enfeeble the defence of the palace, and deliver the king and his family into the hands of his enemies, their success could not be very problematical; but the democratic tyrants wished to make "assurance doubly sure," and M. Rœderer, the procureur syndic of the department, at the head of a deputation of its members, put the finishing stroke to the work by deceiving the king, and thereby prevailing upon him to go to the national assembly.*

In following the council of Rœderer, the king is more to be blamed than, perhaps, in any action of his life; firm in resisting the friends who counselled him to quit his palace, and trust himself into the hands of the friends of the constitution, he yielded to the advice of an enemy,† and delivered

* The attachment of the directors of the department to royalty and the constitution was known, but it was composed of timid men, and all of them a little tinctured with democracy. We have always seen, that such men are incapable, upon any serious crisis, of taking the measures they ought to take, and that the lovers of anarchy have an immense advantage over them.

† Rœderer himself could never be mistaken as a friend to the king. He was, in fact, a man who, acting only from per-

livered himself into the hands of that assembly, which had applauded the petition presented but a few days before for his suspension.

Since the king had accepted the constitution, and sworn to maintain it, he had shewn the most determined resolution to keep his word, and had resisted every offer,* and every temptation to the contrary; there can, therefore, remain little doubt, but that he embraced this fatal determination from a belief, that it was the only method of preventing bloodshed; that the term of kingly dominion in France was near approaching, he had long had reason to suppose, and ever since the 20th of June must have been certain. But though he must have conceived, that his enemies wanted his throne, he had, probably, no idea, that they wanted his life, nor that of his family. Royalty had long been a burthen, and ceasing to act as a king, he determined to submit in the

sonal motives, made court to all parties, and took care not to offend any openly. Even in the present case, when he led the monarch and his family captive, he might and did boast of having saved their lives. The queen opposed herself strongly to this measure.

* For the offers made to the king by the royalists and constitutional parties, who had coalized in order to oppose the anarchists, see *Note L.* at the end; as none of these were attempted to be put in execution, we should not have noticed them, were it not to prove, that the party of moderate revolutionists could conspire as well as others, as soon as they could no longer rule.

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manner that was the least likely to be fatal to his people, to his family, and to himself.

We have already observed, that the details of this terrible day are foreign to the present work ; besides, this day alone would require a volume : we must, therefore, only look to the conduct of the leaders of the people, and still follow them out in their villany and in their cruelty.

On the arrival of the royal family at the assembly, they were not received with any studied marks of disrespect, for the question of which party was the strongest was not yet decided.

The king, on quitting the palace, had given orders, that no resistance should be made,* he had even ordered that it should be evacuated ; but, through the confusion which reigned at the time, his orders were not communicated to the

* The words of the king were, "*Allons, Messieurs, il n'y a plus rien à faire ici.*" This was a direct order to abandon all idea of resistance, and even to abandon the palace itself ; and had it been transmitted to the guards and gentlemen who were in the apartments, would have prevented the battle, and thereby greatly diminished the horrors of that bloody day ; but in the midst of the confusion it was forgotten, and this made the guards in the palace think that the king had basely abandoned them. M. Bertrand, in his letter to the president of the national convention, says, that there were so many witnesses to the truth of this fact, that it is impossible to doubt its reality.

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Swiss guards, nor to the other soldiers who were in the palace; and it is probable, that if the king had remained in the palace, or if the order which he left had been attended to, that day would not have been so fatal to his party.

Though the Swiss, and all the guards and other persons in the palace, lost courage when they found themselves abandoned, and thought that they were betrayed, yet the victory was at first on their side, and it is astonishing how they made head against such a numerous enemy. There were not above 1000 persons in all who defended the palace, and who were dispersed in different courts and apartments; their assailants had cannon, while those in the palace had none; yet above 4000 of the assailants were killed, and the victory would, in all human probability, have been decidedly in favour of royalty, had its brave defenders not thought they were abandoned by his majesty, and left to be sacrificed.* There are, therefore, many reasons for thinking, that without the insidious advice of Rœderer the Jacobin

* If they had not thought this, their first outset having been victorious, the national guards would have joined them, as those brave fellows always prefer the strongest side, and it would have ended like the fusillade of the Champ de Mars, the cause of order would have triumphed, and, perhaps, time might have operated gradual changes on the constitution, that would have rendered it capable of maintaining itself.

faction would not have succeeded, notwithstanding all its precautions.*

The 10th of August is, no doubt, the day on which the anarchists prevailed completely; but there is not a day in which they were either more contemptible or more horrible. The cowardice of the morning was equalled only by the cruelties of the afternoon; cowardly combatants they became merciless conquerors, and the assembly set the seal upon its insignificance and its perfidy to the nation, by becoming the passive instrument of the faction which ruled.

No sooner had victory declared on the side of the people, than the sanguinary messengers of the mob and the assembly vied with each other

* The contrast between the 14th of July, 1789, and the 10th of August, 1792, is very striking. At the period first mentioned, the peaceable and quiet inhabitants of a large city rise in a mass, and put to flight, without bloodshed or resistance, a very numerous military force; on the 10th of August, a very inconsiderable military power is opposed, and at the first with great success, to a mass of people, bred up to insurrection and plunder, and well supplied with arms and ammunition, which last the guards of the palace wanted. The Marfellois and their companions were commanded by General Westerman, a Prussian, and had abundance of ammunition, each man having 100 cartridges, while the guards sent to protect the palace had only three charges.

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in humbling his majesty and exalting the leader of the factious, the mayor of Paris. The decrees of that memorable day are too descriptive of the abject and mean spirit of the assembly,* but that of their hatred to royalty, not to be preserved as specimens of their manner of acting.

It was decreed first, that his majesty should be sent to the palace of the Luxemburg, with his family. The decree of suspension was only provisional, the civil list was suspended, but a revenue for the king was to be assigned. There appeared in all this *some remains* of a regard for royalty, but no---These decrees were to deceive the eighty-three departments of France, seventy-three of which were known to be in favour of royalty, and a miserable prison, hard treatment, and the bare necessaries of nature, were for Louis XVI. and his unfortunate and amiable family. This more than Machavilian duplicity and savage cruelty was planned in presence of that interesting assemblage of suffering goodness, innocence, and beauty, that would have disarmed any *other* band

* During the whole of the day the mob sent addresses and propositions to the assembly, some of which were ridiculously extravagant, and all were received with enthusiasm, and whatever was proposed was decreed by acclamation and unanimity. [See the Appendix Note M.]

of savages and robbers, except a French national assembly.*

All men are not obliged to be brave, for bravery is a natural quality, and not an acquired accomplishment; the assembly might, therefore, be excused for the conduct it pursued while under the immediate influence of personal fear, were it not that, in proportion as that fear wore off, its decrees became more cruel and unjust. At the end of the fourth day the king and his family found the provisional suspension converted into imprisonment, in which all the comforts, and many of the necessaries of life, were denied them; while the assembly added to the mockery of the injustice by assigning them a fixed sum of money † for supplying their wants, which was never intended to be paid.

The assembly was afraid to show their intentions till all the faithful attendants of the monarch had been dispersed; and it was not till after the few gentlemen were dispersed who had fol-

* As it is esteemed a republican virtue to call things by their true names, besides, as brigandage and murder have become honourable in France, it is to be presumed that the calm representatives of the French people will have no objection to their own rules being applied to themselves.

† Half a million annually was proposed, or about twenty thousand pounds; but decrees were now no more than the words of an intoxicated man—never thought of after.

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lowed him to the national assembly, that the royal family was put under the care of its most cruel enemies, Petion and Manuel.

The monarchy of France had ceased morally to exist ever since the 14th of July 1789, and an end was put even to the shadow of kingly power by this last insurrection. Hitherto a jumble of principles ill-combined had been the occasion of much misery, misfortune, and crime; but what follows was restrained by no principles whatever, by no government, nor even by the appearance of one; and, if what is past is a specimen of the conduct of men under the combined influence of mistaken principles and violent passions, what follows is a still more terrible one of what men do when under the influence of passion only, without the controul of any principle at all. In the first part of the revolution people talked of right and justice, though they do not seem to have been understood; but, in the latter part of their career, the democratic leaders have only talked of necessity, expediency, and severity.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



